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# LANDSCAPE IN ART

BEFORE

CLAUDE & SALVATOR





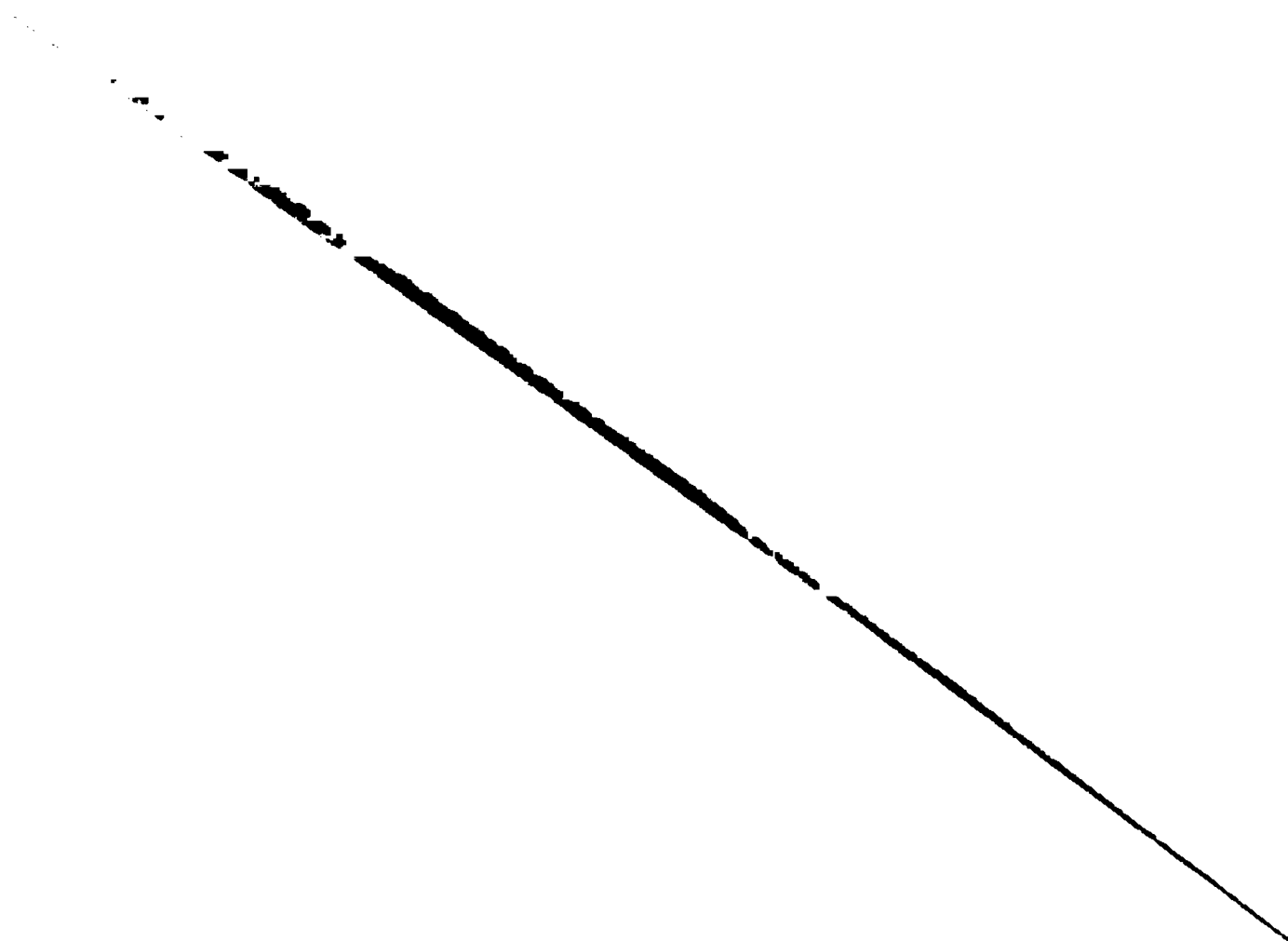


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FIG. 121.—TITIAN'S LANDSCAPE AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE.

•  
*Frontispiece.*





# LANDSCAPE IN ART

BEFORE

CLAUDE & SALVATOR

BY

JOSIAH GILBERT

AUTHOR OF 'CADORE, OR TITIAN'S COUNTRY' ;  
AND ONE OF THE AUTHORS OF 'THE DOLOMITE MOUNTAINS,' ETC. ETC.

"Since the men who have come before me have taken for their own every useful or necessary theme, I must do like one who, being poor, comes last to the fair, and can find no other way of providing himself than by taking all things already seen by other buyers, and not taken, but refused, by reason of their lesser value. I then will load my humble pack with this despised and rejected merchandise."

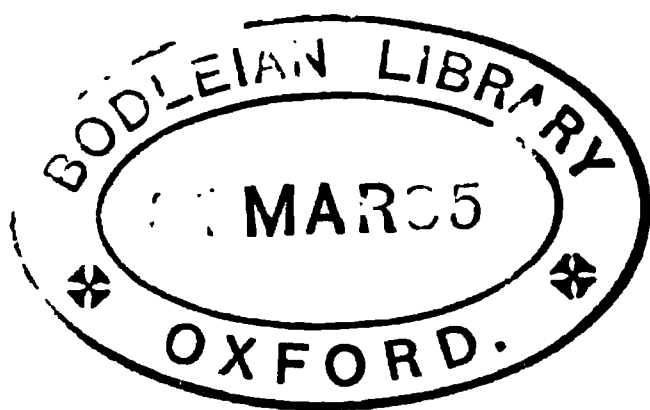
LEONARDO DA VINCI.

WITH 141 ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET

1885



*Printed by R. & R. CLARK, Edinburgh.*

TO  
MARY STEWARD GILBERT  
THE INSPIRER OF THIS WORK AND THE UNWEARIED  
ASSOCIATE IN ALL THE LABOUR OF  
ITS PREPARATION,  
THE COMPLETED VOLUME IS  
NOW GRATEFULLY  
INSCRIBED.



## PREFACE.

SEVERAL years ago, when engaged upon the work entitled *Cadore, or Titian's Country*, I had occasion to examine the landscape introduced more or less as background in the works of several Italian masters of the sixteenth century. My object was to ascertain how far the strange forms of the Dolomite mountains, constantly to be recognised in Titian's landscape, could be identified in that of contemporary painters.

During this investigation I was struck with the amount of landscape beauty which passed unnoticed amidst the imposing claims of great sacred subjects, or those of mythologic legend; I felt, too, that in these neglected corners of canvases, if the study of them were sufficiently wide and thorough, might be traced the rise and early progress of landscape-painting. Some years had passed when it was proposed to me to write something like a history of this delightful art. It was a task too large to undertake, but the suggestion drew my thoughts again to the germs of landscape spread through all mediæval art. The more I looked into the subject, the more interesting it became, and it had also the fascination of a region hitherto unexplored, and retreating into a dim unknown.

For it soon appeared that landscape showed itself in art almost as soon as there was art at all, and that in the pictorial decorations of ancient Rome landscape had reached a high degree of picturesque expression; then it became necessary to follow the course of its decline, with the decline of everything else, through the periods,



curiously interesting in themselves, of early Christian mosaic and manuscript illumination, till all was lost in the Byzantine bog.

Manuscript illumination, however, in some sort bridged the gulf to mediæval times, and at length I found myself in Flanders, amidst the art of the Van Eycks—an art closely linked, so far as landscape is concerned, with that of Italy on the one hand, and of Germany on the other.

The result of these different lines of inquiry is now placed before the reader, and, as the characteristic attitude of each great master towards landscape is incidentally touched upon, the history of art during its great periods may be said to disclose itself from a new standpoint. Two chapters upon the appreciation of landscape in literature, up to the date when art fully adopted landscape as a subject worthy of its highest powers, have been added in illustration of the growth of this perception; and in one more chapter of this introductory kind I have ventured to set forth the principles of art applied in the landscape branch of it, which form the basis of subsequent criticisms.

My subject closes with the advent of Claude and Salvator, because with them landscape-art reached its first illustrious period of development, expanding afterwards in an ever-widening stream to the days of Turner, the era of its greatest glory.

Such have been the inception and the purpose of the work. In carrying out the plan proposed I am sufficiently conscious of many shortcomings, and the likelihood of many errors. I would fain have rendered my work more complete within the limits marked out for it, but, while "art is long, life is short," and I have been forced to stop, lest completion should fail altogether.

It is a pleasant duty to acknowledge my obligations to friends to whom different portions of the manuscript have been submitted. Mr. Douglas W. Freshfield, Mr. James Beddard, and Mr. John G. Waller, have each done me kind and valuable service. Mr. Pearson

has bestowed great pains in rendering drawings which, many of them but hasty sketches to assist the memory, were often difficult for a wood-engraver to interpret. Messrs. Dawson's photo-typographic process has enabled me to increase the number of illustrations, and to introduce some excellent reproductions of engravings, though reduced in size.

I have already resorted to the great Leonardo for a motto—let me now conclude with a few more words of his: "I believe that before I am at the end of this (task) I shall have to repeat the same thing several times, for which, O reader, do not blame me, for the subjects are many."

MARDEN ASH,

*1st November 1884.*



# CONTENTS.

## CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
THE SCOPE OF LANDSCAPE ART . . . . .	1

What is Landscape?—Limitations of the term.

## CHAPTER II.

LANDSCAPE IN LITERATURE—GREEK AND LATIN . . . . .	6
---	---

Early Myths—Homer—Hesiod—Sophocles—Plato—Aristophanes—Theocritus—Lucretius—Catullus—Virgil—Horace—Tibullus—Cicero—Pliny.

## CHAPTER III.

LANDSCAPE IN LITERATURE—MEDÆVAL AND TO THE END OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY . . . . .	26
--	----

Hebrew poetry—St. Basil—St. Gregory of Nyssa—St. Chrysostom—Ausonius—Claudian—Indian poetry—Troubadours and Minnesingers—The early Romances—Dante—Petrarch—Boccaccio—Lorenzo di Medici—Leonardo da Vinci—Ariosto—Bembo—Aretino—Tasso—Camoens—Chaucer—Raleigh—Sidney—Spenser—Shakespeare—Cowley—Milton—Summary—Relations between landscape-art and literature.

## CHAPTER IV.

PRINCIPLES OF ART APPLIED TO LANDSCAPE . . . . .	53
--	----

FORM :—Character of line—Nature of the beautiful—Composition of lines—Proportion of parts—Perspective—Organic unity—Fitness—Record of time—Dignity—Generalisation—Composition. SHADOW :—Relief—Effect—Concentration—Mystery—Pathos. COLOUR :—Harmonies—Con-

trasts—Influence of atmosphere—Gradation—Effects of shadow, of reflection, of transparency—Colour a help to composition—Expresses sentiment—Appeals to imagination. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS:—Inherent powers of art—The real and the ideal—Noble art—Pathos of nature—Its gradual apprehension in art—Conventionalism—Personality of painters.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE LANDSCAPE OF ANCIENT ART . . . . . 86

Egyptian—Assyrian—Indian—Chinese—Japanese. GREEK :—Polygnotus—Agatharchos—Scenery of the Greek stage—Apollodorus—Zeuxis—Parrhasius—Apelles—Genre-painting—Mural decoration. ROMAN :—Pompeian—An olive grove—Coast scenery—Scenic illusion—Wall-paintings at Rome—Ludius—Livia's Villa—Tombs—The Palestrina Nymphaeum—The *Odyssey* pictures. Summary.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE LANDSCAPE OF EARLY CHRISTIAN MOSAICS . . . . . 114

FRESCOS of the Catacombs. CHURCH MOSAICS :—Ravenna—Rome.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE LANDSCAPE OF MANUSCRIPTS . . . . . 123

Italian—Byzantine—Irish—Age of Charlemagne—Gothic vulgate of the ninth century—Origin of Diaper—Influence of glass-painting—Awakening in the thirteenth century—French manuscripts—Netherland manuscripts—Disappearance of Diaper—The landscape of various manuscripts—Illustrations to the poems of Christina of Pisa—The Bedford Missal—*Book of Hours* by Gerhard Hoornbach—*Thesaurus Historiarum*—Influence of manuscript-art upon landscape.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### EARLY FLEMISH LANDSCAPE . . . . . 146

Hubert van Eyck—John van Eyck—Roger van der Weyden—Ouwater—Hans Memlinc—Dierick Bouts—Gerard van der Meire—Gheerardt David—Joachim Patenier—Quentin Matsys—Henri de Bles—Jan Mostaert.

## CHAPTER IX.

	PAGE
THE LANDSCAPE OF EARLY ITALIAN ART . . . . .	178

Duccio—Giovanni di Paolo—Taddeo di Bartolo—Giotto—Jacopo Casentino—Fra Angelico—Masaccio—Filippo Lippi—Uccello—Pesellino—Benozzo Gozzoli—Piero Della Francesca—Piero Pollaiuolo—Verrocchio—Ghirlandaio—Filippino Lippi—Cosimo Roselli—Sandro Botticelli.

## CHAPTER X.

THE LANDSCAPE OF ITALIAN ART IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY .	214
---	-----

Leonardo da Vinci—Lorenzo di Credi—Piero di Cosimo—Bernardino Luini—Beltraffio—Pietro Perugino—Luca Signorelli—Francia—Lorenzo Costa—Amico Aspertini—Pinturicchio—Bernardino Fungai—Ant. de Bazzi (Il Sodoma)—Fra Bartolommeo—Mariotto Albertinelli—Andrea del Sarto.

## CHAPTER XI.

LANDSCAPE OF ITALIAN ART—THE RAPHAEL PERIOD . . . . .	251
---	-----

Michael Angelo—Raphael—Correggio—Garofalo—Ludovico Mazzolino—Dossio Dossi.

## CHAPTER XII.

GERMAN LANDSCAPE OF THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES . . . . .	271
---	-----

Wilhelm of Cologne—Stephan Lochner—Master of the Lyversberg Passion—Martin Schongauer—Michael Wohlgemuth—Albrecht Dürer—Hans Kulmbach—Hans L. Schäufolein—Hans Burgkmair—George Pencz—Sebald Beham—Bartel Beham—Hans Baldung—Nicholas Manuel—Albrecht Altdorfer—Mathias Grunewald—Melchior Feselen—Lucas Cranach—Hans Holbein, the elder—Hans Holbein.

## CHAPTER XIII.

LANDSCAPE OF THE VENETIAN SCHOOL, FIFTEENTH CENTURY .	309
---	-----

Gentile da Fabriano—Antonello da Messina—Andrea Mantegna—Francesco Mantegna—The Vivarini—Carlo Crivelli—Gentile Bellini—Giovanni Bellini—Vittore Carpaccio—Cima da Conegliano—Marco Basaiti—Giorione—Palma Vecchio—Pordenone.

## CHAPTER XIV.

	PAGE
LANDSCAPE OF THE VENETIAN SCHOOL IN CULMINATION AND DECLINE . . . . .	341
Titian—Savoldo—Lorenzo Lotto—Bonifazio—Paris Bordone—Bassano— Schiavone—Veronese—Tintoretto.	

## CHAPTER XV.

THE LANDSCAPE OF THE CARRACCI SCHOOL . . . . .	378
Ludovico Carracci—Agostino Carracci—Annibale Carracci—Domenichino— Francesco Albani—Guido Reni—Allori (Bronzino)—Alessandro Allori— Cristofano Allori—Scarsellino—Lanfranco—Sisto Badalocchio— Schedone—Caravaggio—Domenico Feti—Guercino.	

## CHAPTER XVI.

ITALIANISED FLEMINGS AND GERMANS OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY	402
Mabuse—Bernhard van Orley—Lucas van Leyden—Jan Schoreel—Lucas Gassel—J. Cornelis Vermeyen—Martin de Vos—Abraham Bloemart— Paul Bril—Pieter Brueghel—Jan Brueghel—Jodocus Momper—Roeland Savery—David Vinckebooms—Lucas van Valkenburg—Pieter Last- mann—Bartholomew de Bruyn—Adam Elsheimer.	

## CHAPTER XVII.

THE LANDSCAPE OF RUBENS . . . . .	424
Influence of Italy—Home scenery—Changeful effects.	

## CHAPTER XVIII.

THE ADVENT OF CLAUDE AND SALVATOR . . . . .	434
Claude Lorraine—Salvator Rosa—Gaspar Poussin—Rembrandt—Turner.	

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

FIG.	PAGE
1. TURNER'S ALPS FROM TURIN . . . . .	57
2. CYCLAMEN . . . . .	58
3. MOUNTAIN OUTLINES: VAN EYCK . . . . .	58
4. TURNER'S TREES AT BOLTON . . . . .	59
5. HILLS ABOVE FLORENCE: TURNER . . . . .	60
6. EXAMPLES OF PROPORTION . . . . .	60
7. CYCLAMEN LEAVES . . . . .	61
8. VIEW FROM ASOLO OVER THE TREVISANA . . . . .	62
9. TURNER'S ROUEN . . . . .	64
10. BELLINI'S MOUNTAINS . . . . .	65
11. AN ASSYRIAN TREE, BRIT. MUS. . . . .	88
12. TREES FROM THE CAVES AT BAGH . . . . .	89
13. MOUNTAIN PEAKS, FROM A JAPANESE JAR . . . . .	92
14. GATEWAY, FROM A POMPEIAN PICTURE . . . . .	100
15. AN OLIVE GROVE, POMPEIAN COLLECTION . . . . .	101
16. LEAF DECORATION, FROM POMPEII . . . . .	102
17. ROCKY COAST SCENE, POMPEII . . . . .	102
18. CYPRESS, POMPEII . . . . .	103
19. TREE FROM LIVIA'S VILLA . . . . .	107
20. THE PALESTRINA NYMPHÆUM . . . . .	109
21. TREE IN THE LATERAN COLLECTION . . . . .	115
22. MOSAICS, STA. MARIA MAGGIORE, ROME . . . . .	116
23. FRAGMENT OF ROCK, SS. COSMO E DAMIANO, ROME . . . . .	116
24. TREE AT SAN VITALE, RAVENNA . . . . .	117
25. TREES FROM S. APOLLINARE NUOVO, RAVENNA . . . . .	118
26. TREE AND ROCK FRAGMENTS, S. APOLLINARE IN CLASSE . . . . .	118
27. ROCK IN THE BAPTISTERY OF STA. MARIA IN COSMEDIN, RAVENNA . . . . .	118
28. CLOUDS AT STA. MARIA MAGGIORE, ROME . . . . .	119
29. CLOUDS AT SS. COSMO E DAMIANO, ROME . . . . .	120
30. CUMULUS CLOUD. S. VITALE, RAVENNA . . . . .	120
31. EVENING CLOUDS, S. APOLLINARE IN CLASSE, RAVENNA . . . . .	121
32. CLOUDS AND TREE. S. PRASEDE, ROME . . . . .	121
33. TREES FROM BOOK OF GENESIS, VIENNA . . . . .	124



FIG.	PAGE
34. STEP ROCKS IN BOOK OF GENESIS, VIENNA . . . . .	125
35. BYZANTINE ROCKS OF NINTH CENTURY . . . . .	125
36. GOATS AND ROCKS FROM MS. OF TENTH CENTURY . . . . .	126
37. TREES IN A GREEK PSALTER, 1066 A.D. . . . .	126
38. TREES FROM THE MELISENDA MS. . . . .	127
39. TREE FROM A GOTHIC VULGATE OF THE NINTH CENTURY . . . . .	129
40. TREE OF LIFE, GOTHIC VULGATE . . . . .	130
41. DESTRUCTION OF PHARAOH, AND A TWELFTH-CENTURY TREE . . . . .	130
42. TREE OF THE SEPULCHRE, ANGLO-NORMAN, TWELFTH CENTURY . . . . .	131
43. PIGS UNDER AN OAK, THIRTEENTH CENTURY . . . . .	134
44. TREE AND ROCK, NETHERLAND WORK, FOURTEENTH CENTURY . . . . .	137
45. ROCKS AND TREES, FROM A PRAYER-BOOK, BODLEIAN . . . . .	138
46. A ROCK OF THE SEASHORE, HISTORY OF JUSTIN . . . . .	138
47. HILLS AND TREES IN THE POEMS OF CHRISTINA OF PISA . . . . .	139
48. ROCK PLATFORM AND WAVES IN THE CHRISTINA MINIATURES . . . . .	139
49. SUPERNATURAL CLOUDS . . . . .	139
50. HERALDIC SIGN FOR CLOUDS . . . . .	140
51. CALIGRAPHIC CLOUDS IN THE ST. ETHELWOLD MS. . . . .	140
52. LAMINATED ROCKS OF THE BEDFORD MISSAL . . . . .	141
53. ANGELS AND THE SHEPHERDS, BEDFORD MISSAL . . . . .	141
54. ENTOMBMENT BY GERHARDT HOORNBAACH . . . . .	142
55. FROM THE HOLY WARRIORS: VAN EYCK, BERLIN . . . . .	150
56. VIEW OF A CITY: J. VAN EYCK, LOUVRE . . . . .	152
57. VIEW OF A CITY: VAN DER WEYDEN, MUNICH . . . . .	156
58. ALPINE SCENERY: MEMLING, BRUGES . . . . .	161
59. THE BAPTISM: MEMLING, BRUGES . . . . .	162
60. ST. CHRISTOPHER: STUERBOUDT, MUNICH . . . . .	164
61. LANDSCAPE OF THE ST. ERASMUS, LOUVAIN . . . . .	167
62. LANDSCAPE BY VAN DER MEIRE, GHENT . . . . .	169
63. FROM THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT: PATENIER, ANTWERP . . . . .	172
64. FROM THE HOLY FAMILY BY QUENTIN MATSYS . . . . .	173
65. FROM THE TEMPTATION OF ST. ANTHONY: H. DE BLES . . . . .	175
66. CHRIST APPEARING TO MARY: DUCCIO, SIENA . . . . .	181
67. ROCKS OF GIOVANNI DI PAOLO, SIENA . . . . .	181
68. TREES AND ROCKS OF GIOTTO, PADUA . . . . .	183
69. LANDSCAPE OF THE "DEPOSITION": FRA ANGELICO . . . . .	187
70. ROCKS FROM THE TRIUMPH OF DEATH: LORENZETTI, PISA . . . . .	188
71. LANDSCAPE OF THE TRIBUTE MONEY: MASACCIO . . . . .	192
72. LANDSCAPE AT S. CLEMENTE, ROME: MASACCIO . . . . .	193
73. FROM THE CAMPO SANTO PISA: BENOZZO GOZZOLI . . . . .	198
74. LANDSCAPE BY GHIRLANDAIO, SISTINE CHAPEL . . . . .	205
75. ROCKS BY GHIRLANDAIO, STA. MARIA NOVELLA . . . . .	206
76. ROCKS IN THE ST. BERNARD OF FILIPPINO LIPPI . . . . .	207
77. TREES AND PATH: SANDRO BOTTICELLI, SISTINE . . . . .	211
78. FROM A SKETCH BY L. DA VINCI . . . . .	216

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

xvii

FIG.	PAGE
79. MOUNTAIN OUTLINES: L. DA VINCI . . . . .	217
80. STORM OVER AN ALPINE VALLEY: L. DA VINCI . . . . .	220
81. FROM THE VIRGIN OF THE ROCKS: L. DA VINCI, LOUVRE . . . . .	222
82. FROM THE ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN: PERUGINO . . . . .	231
83. LANDSCAPE OF CHRIST IN THE GARDEN: PERUGINO . . . . .	231
84. LANDSCAPE OF THE MADONNA: PERUGINO, NATIONAL GALLERY. . . . .	233
85. LANDSCAPE IN THE SISTINE CHAPEL BY SIGNORELLI . . . . .	235
86. FROM AN ANNUNCIATION BY FRANCA, BRERA . . . . .	238
87. LANDSCAPE OF A NATIVITY: FRANCA, BOLOGNA . . . . .	239
88. LANDSCAPE OF THE ST. CATHERINE: FRA BARTOLOMMEO . . . . .	247
89. LANDSCAPE TO LEFT IN THE "CONNESTABILE" MADONNA: RAPHAEL . . . . .	255
90. LANDSCAPE TO RIGHT IN THE "CONNESTABILE" MADONNA: RAPHAEL . . . . .	256
91. LANDSCAPE OF APOLLO AND MARSYAS: RAPHAEL. . . . .	258
92. LANDSCAPE OF THE VISION OF EZEKIEL: RAPHAEL . . . . .	264
93. LANDSCAPE OF CORREGGIO'S MADONNA, TRIBUNE, FLORENCE . . . . .	266
94. MOUNTAIN SCENE FROM THE ENTOMBMENT: DÜRER . . . . .	277
95. VIEW IN DÜRER'S PORTRAIT AT THE UFFIZI . . . . .	278
96. LANDSCAPE FROM VISITATION OF THE VIRGIN: DÜRER . . . . .	284
97. FROM THE RAISING OF DRUSIANA: BURCKMAIR, AUGSBURG . . . . .	288
98. RECOVERY OF THE BODY OF ST. QUIRINUS: ALTDORFER. . . . .	294
99. MOONLIGHT AMONG TREES: ALTDORFER . . . . .	298
100. MARTYRDOM OF ST. QUIRINUS: ALTDORFER . . . . .	300
101. FAC-SIMILE, REDUCED, OF A PEN-DRAWING BY ALTDORFER . . . . .	302
102. THE TARPEIAN ROCK, CRANACH . . . . .	305
103. LUCERNE, FROM PART OF A DRAWING: HOLBEIN . . . . .	306
104. MOUNTAIN LANDSCAPE: HOLBEIN . . . . .	307
105. MANTEGNA'S HILLSIDE . . . . .	313
106. MANTEGNA'S ROCKS, FROM A DRAWING . . . . .	314
107. BELLINI'S LANDSCAPE OF THE BARBARIGO PICTURE AT MURANO . . . . .	321
108. BELLINI'S LANDSCAPE OF THE MADONNA AT S. FRANCESCO DELLA VIGNA . . . . .	322
109. BELLINI'S ST. JEROME AT S. CRISOSTOMO, VENICE . . . . .	323
110. LANDSCAPE FROM A PICTURE AT S. ALVISE: CARPACCIO . . . . .	325
111. ARCH OF ROCKS AT S. GIORGIO DE' SCHIAVONE: CARPACCIO . . . . .	327
112. ALPINE MEADOW-SCENE: CIMA, PARMA GALLERY . . . . .	329
113. THE CHALDEAN SAGES: GIORGIONE, VIENNA . . . . .	335
114. FROM A FRESCO BY TITIAN IN THE SOVOLA DEL SANTO, PADUA . . . . .	344
115. LANDSCAPE IN THE SACRED AND PROFANE LOVE: TITIAN . . . . .	345
116. LANDSCAPE OF THE MADONNA IN GLORY, SERRAVALLE: TITIAN . . . . .	346
117. FROM TITIAN'S PORTRAIT OF THE DUCHESS OF URBINO, UFFIZI . . . . .	347
118. THE ST. JEROME OF TITIAN, FROM AN ENGRAVING . . . . .	349
119. FROM TITIAN'S SKETCH FOR HIS FRESCO AT PADUA . . . . .	350
120. FROM TITIAN'S ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS . . . . .	351
121. FROM THE LANDSCAPE BY TITIAN AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
122. CASTLE OF CADORE, IN THE PICTURE AT ALNWICK . . . . .	354
123. PESARO, FROM SIR A. H. LAYARD'S ST. JEROME: SAVOLDO . . . . .	357

FIG.		PAGE
124.	FROM AN ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS: SAVOLDO, TURIN . . .	358
125.	FROM A PICTURE IN THE VENICE ACADEMY: BONIFAZIO . . .	361
126.	LANDSCAPE IN THE STA. GIUSTINA: P. VERONESE . . .	368
127.	THE MAGDALEN IN THE WILDERNESS: TINTORETTO . . .	<i>To face page</i> 371
128.	LANDSCAPE OF THE CRUCIFIXION, SCUOLA DI SAN ROCCO: TINTORETTO . . .	<i>To face page</i> 372
129.	SUNSET OVER THE LAGOONS: TINTORETTO . . .	375
130.	FROM A DRAWING BY AGOSTINO CARRACCI, PITTI . . .	383
131.	LANDSCAPE WITH MUSICIANS: ANNIBALE CARRACCI, LOUVRE . . .	<i>To face page</i> 383
132.	ERMINIA AND THE SHEPHERDS: DOMENICHINO . . .	388
133.	FROM AN ENGRAVING, AFTER A DRAWING BY GUERCINO . . .	400
134.	LANDSCAPE BY P. BRIL, BERLIN . . .	410
135.	LANDSCAPE BY J. BRUEGHEL, FROM AN ENGRAVING . . .	<i>To face page</i> 415
136.	FLIGHT INTO EGYPT: ELSHEIMER, FROM THE ENGRAVING BY GOUDT . . .	<i>To face page</i> 422
137.	LANDSCAPE BY RUBENS, FROM AN ENGRAVING BY BOLSWERT . . .	<i>To face page</i> 429
138.	VIEW OF THE ESCURIAL: RUBENS . . .	<i>To face page</i> 430
139.	THE SHIPWRECK OF ÆNEAS: RUBENS, FROM AN ENGRAVING . . .	432
140.	LANDSCAPE BY CLAUDE, FROM AN ENGRAVING . . .	<i>To face page</i> 436
141.	LANDSCAPE BY SALVATOR ROSA, FORMERLY IN THE GUADAGNI COLLECTION . . .	<i>To face page</i> 438

## CHAPTER I.

### THE SCOPE OF LANDSCAPE-ART.

THE spirit of art, first shown, it may be presumed, in device of  
~~any human element must have found its first definite~~

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### ERRATA.

Page 325, line 14, and page 326, title of Fig. 111, *for* Schiavone *read* Schiavoni.

Page 422, line 10, *for* Leichtenstein *read* Liechtenstein.

— now, or something like a view, a river, a castle  
could be put before the eye; a hill; the semblance of walls and  
towers—how much would these help to tell the story? Thus was  
added, but only as an explanatory adjunct to the human figure or  
the divine personage concerned in human affairs, something of the  
external scene of things.

Hence it was in architecture, the home of the man,—in sculp-  
ture and painting, recording the doings and feelings of the man or  
the man-god,—that art found its sufficient scope, and for ages had no  
other. In architecture thoughts of beauty and grandeur could be  
expressed; sculpture and painting found in the human frame all  
they needed for rendering what thought conceived or heart could feel.  
But all the while there lay at hand untouched, except for casual  
illustration, a vast region abundantly rich in the beautiful, the grand,  
and the emotional, waiting to be explored—waiting to yield up its

FIG.		PAGE
124.	FROM AN ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS: SAVOLDO, TURIN . . .	358
125.	FROM A PICTURE IN THE VENICE ACADEMY: BONIFAZIO . . .	361
126.	LANDSCAPE IN THE STA. GIUSTINA: P. VERONESE . . .	368
127.	THE MAGDALEN IN THE WILDERNESS: TINTORETTO . . . <i>To face page</i>	371
128.	LANDSCAPE OF THE CRUCIFIXION, SCUOLA DI SAN ROCCO: TINTORETTO . . . <i>To face page</i>	372
129.	SUNSET OVER THE LAGOONS: TINTORETTO . . .	375
130.	FROM A DRAWING BY AGOSTINO CARRACCI, PITTI . . .	383
131.	LANDSCAPE WITH MUSICIANS: ANNIBALE CARRACCI, LOUVRE . . . <i>To face page</i>	383
132.	ERMINIA AND THE SHEPHERDS: DOMENICHINO . . .	388
133.	FROM AN ENGRAVING, AFTER A DRAWING BY GUERCINO . . .	400
134.	LANDSCAPE BY P. BRIL, BERLIN . . .	410
135.	LANDSCAPE BY J. BRUEGHEL, FROM AN ENGRAVING . . . <i>To face page</i>	415
136.	FLIGHT INTO EGYPT: FLIGHT INTO EGYPT . . .	

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE SCOPE OF LANDSCAPE-ART.

THE spirit of art, first shown, it may be presumed, in device of apparel and personal ornament, must have found its first definite and large embodiment in architecture. The earliest of all social necessities would be the dwelling, and with construction of the dwelling, however rude, came the opportunity to display some notion of symmetry, some feeling for proportion, some expression of an idea. Then, as the dwelling increased in magnitude and importance,—as it became the royal dwelling, and the dwelling for the god,—this expression gained in dignity, and there came also symbolical representation; a mute but potent world of figures rose in colour upon the walls, or stood carved in marble or cast in bronze. Here art found great and endless scope and reached an endless fame.

But in time, along with the human figure depicted upon the walls in every variety of action and office, there came hints of the world it lived in. A tree, or something like a tree; a river, if that could be put before the eye; a hill; the semblance of walls and towers—how much would these help to tell the story? Thus was added, but only as an explanatory adjunct to the human figure or the divine personage concerned in human affairs, something of the external scene of things.

Hence it was in architecture, the home of the man,—in sculpture and painting, recording the doings and feelings of the man or the man-god,—that art found its sufficient scope, and for ages had no other. In architecture thoughts of beauty and grandeur could be expressed; sculpture and painting found in the human frame all they needed for rendering what thought conceived or heart could feel. But all the while there lay at hand untouched, except for casual illustration, a vast region abundantly rich in the beautiful, the grand, and the emotional, waiting to be explored—waiting to yield up its

powers to whomsoever could use them. Landscape offered all this to art, but long in vain. The time came at last, though by slow degrees, and then art saw and seized a new opportunity.

But what is landscape? To what is this new word properly applied? The dictionary does not help us much, for landscape, after all, was the creation of art. It was the artistic eye that discovered landscape in the surrounding scene of things, though poetic vision had, as we shall see, frequent forecasts of its charm.

"This green earth," we say, "that blue sky;" and such vague and general terms may serve for the occasion—nay, sufficiently express all that some minds care to see. But what of the real spectacle? Look, and the green dissolves away into a maze of soft sweet colours; look more closely still, and objects of infinitely varied form as well as tint fill up the scene. Trees spring from the soil, spread their arms abroad, and uphold a weight of foliage; hills swell upon the sight and break in crags, or soar in rocky pinnacles; woods climb the steeps and hang in purple folds; vales wind among the hills, disappearing in their recesses; a stream, a river, wanders and widens into shimmering reaches, or yields its waters to a lake that shines, a second sky; a mountain rises dark into the blue, and along the far horizon mountain rolls on mountain bathed in tints of azure, or white with gleaming snows. Or view that vast floor of waters which we call the sea, restless with glittering waves that are lost at last in one level waste, bounded only as it seems by the very verge of the world!

Above, the overarching sky changes to all colours with the opening and the closing day. The moon succeeds, and, "Empress of the noon of night," pours forth her silver splendour. Nor day nor night, nor sun nor moon alone, brings change into the sky. From time to time it is mottled with pearl, or swathed in veils of vapour, or hidden in part or altogether by huge bulks of cloud that, swift or slow, pursue their windborne way. And all these powers of the sky are potent too on earth, working endless witchery with alternate gloom and brightness, storm and calm.

It is also a living spectacle, a world of creatures busy or at rest. Among them man appears, and all other life becomes subservient; he invades the scene with his works; a dwelling thrusts its roof into sight; a town displays itself, curving along a shore, set stately in the plain, or climbing the hillside with walls and towers that catch the morning or the evening glow; gardens and

groves enhance its beauty; industries many and various give to it life and interest.

Such in brief are the main features of the panorama which surrounds us. Evidently here is an interminable array of objects, and of objects full of beauty. There are ceaseless diversities of form, ceaseless interchanges of light and shade; colours radiant, soft, and deep; contrasts, harmonies, and combinations without end; while amidst the abounding intricacy perspective brings unity and order. Yet this is not all. This great spectacle has power to suggest ideas, to raise emotion; there is discovered in it an answering to the human soul as it thinks and as it feels.

To poet and artist this long hidden mystery was at last revealed, and modern civilisation has been abundantly leavened with a sense of landscape beauty. Yet there is much that is superficial in popular admiration. We have spoken of human industries as taking part in the scene, but to many observers the industries alone are the feature to be observed; economics offer the only source of interest. They look at the field for its cultivation, and note the trimness of its fences; they look at the wood not for its trees but for its timber, at the stream for its navigable capabilities or its water power; roads are interesting as they suit the traveller, houses as they are four-square and weather-tight; towns stand well if they command the sources of trade. All this cannot be objected to. The hand of man has been creating after its fashion, contriving, altering,—such action is man's prerogative; he must needs turn the surface of the earth to all manner of account; but admiration of this is not admiration of landscape.

Nor is it landscape that is sought by the majority of those whose object in the outdoor world is pleasure not business. Sport which carries so many people over miles of country, and into some of the wildest solitudes, is a brave exercise of limb and lung, and sends the eye searching far and wide over field and moor and forest. There is no doubt in this an exhilarating sense of freedom; there may belong to it in some of the selecter minds an enjoyment of scenery nearly allied to that of which we speak, but the exigencies of the chase allow no pause for landscape to make its true appeal. So far we cannot even except the angler, though of all forms of sport his seems to breed most sympathy with nature.

The ride, the drive, the promenade, afford a pleasure in which, to most, the landscape element is quite subordinate. It is fresh air,



space of sky and breadth of earth, brightness and colour, more than all perhaps, people—crowds of people—that make the charm. It is the moving play of life that captivates, although to the intercourse with folk, a background of nature may not be amiss; and if the promenade command a prospect, all the better. So the picnic is by choice spread in some charming spot; but whatever the gifts of nature around, they are but adjuncts to the talk and the viands—they set off the grace of life. The great sea must be only a murmur and a sparkle; the great mountains must not be too great.

Nor can we call delight in garden or park a test of true landscape feeling. The garden is too limited, too formal, too clearly ruled by man's device. It is devoted too evidently to flowers as a show, to fruit as a luxury; its lawns are too soft, its paths too carefully ordered. Yet the garden may, under certain conditions, come very near to landscape, and the park still more so; size helps this last, the majesty of trees dignifies it; it lies up and down the hills; it may cunningly imitate a natural scene. Yet with all its delights—and the avenue is a noble feature, and the ornamental water charming (only that it is ornamental), and the palace in the midst may be of lordly grace—still the park is not exactly landscape.

For landscape—in the sense that poetry and art have learnt to apprehend it—must be nature's work. It is in the main what the powers of nature—vegetation, sunshine and storm, the winds, the waters—have concurred to fashion. The seasons and the years have had free course over it. It is the careless beauty unmeddled with, unforced, that has come to be, and which, if here and there destroyed or interrupted, rises in some new form under nature's hand. This is what poet and artist have to deal with, and this under all those transient effects of colour and of light in which the moods of nature seem to be expressed. Poet and artist alike have in all this to interpret nature's appeal to the imagination, and to utter her response to human feeling.

The special office of the artist is to render this interpretation, by means of lines and tints, a language addressed to the eye, the adequacy of which we shall presently discuss. But in confining landscape-art to the natural scene, we must remember that we have already admitted the presence not only of "the cattle upon a thousand hills" but of man and his works, for in this sense man is a part of nature, and nature is always claiming what he does for herself. Landscape-art welcomes man as introducing the momentous

human story into the spectacle which it is her function to interpret. The natural scene accepts, and art delights, in the path that lies across the sward and the road that penetrates the forest or winds over the hill, while the stately tree is all the more interesting as it lends to the human habitation a protecting shade. All those industries that are concerned with the outdoor world find, when not too obtrusive, a legitimate place. Over the work of the plough and the ingathering of harvest Nature smiles and Art rejoices; boats glide along the streams, and all manner of navigable craft track their way upon the deep; they partake of all the accidents of light and shade which grace the natural scene; and to art they are a special gain, for they bring with them colours of their own which enhance those of nature. Landscape-art may even depict a town or a street, but this must be under the condition that it is but a part of the scene, or that nature rules over it with her effects of sunshine and cloud, and the history she has written upon the age-worn walls. A building would be incongruous with landscape, had it not become, by virtue of time or vegetation or incidents of light, all but a natural object itself.

Thus landscape-art has a noble sphere, and beauty of a kind peculiar to itself. Historical and portrait art must ever indeed take precedence, because there is no greater object within the scope of our senses than the human being. His form, the ideal of beauty, grace, and strength, the fit instrument of a moral and spiritual nature; his countenance "a tablet of unutterable thoughts," and a sensitive index of emotion—these afford an inexhaustible range for art and its absolutely noblest subject. But landscape-art comes next, and with this advantage, that its highest excellences are more ready of attainment. It searches out the grace, the beauty, the grandeur, and the pathos that dwell in earth and sky. It reads the face of nature; it finds therein a wondrous reflex of the human soul, and refuses to take this reading as a "fallacy." It discovers that as music touches and thrills the innermost chords of being, so will landscape, in its harmonies and contrasts, soothe or rouse the spirit, and with this great privilege, that no subtle foul suggestion ever accompanies the spectacle. The fair robe of nature is the vesture of innocence; she walks in beauty and in mystery, and her "word is pure, enlightening the eyes."

## CHAPTER II.

### LANDSCAPE IN LITERATURE—GREEK AND LATIN.

Early Myths — Homer — Hesiod — Sophocles — Plato — Aristophanes — Theocritus —  
Lucretius—Catullus—Virgil—Horace—Tibullus—Cicero—Pliny.

ALTHOUGH landscape-art possesses, as we have seen, so rich and fair a field, it is comparatively a modern art. This naturally follows from the fact that appreciation of natural scenery has only in modern times become a distinctive feature of civilisation. It is beyond the limits of our subject to set forth the complex conditions which have led to this. Incidentally some of them may be suggested in the following pages, and we may briefly state now the conclusion that the change is mainly due to the development of a moral sensitiveness which has affected all culture, and which has discovered a sympathetic response in the spectacle of nature. No doubt other things have helped. The discovery of the New World, and the subsequent and ever-growing spirit of travel; the safety and leisure which now attend the ordinary traveller; the revolt against conventions of society, and the trammels of a highly-wrought civilisation; an awakened interest in the past, and in all historic lands and scenes; the charm of solitude, more scarce as the human crowd increases—these and other circumstances have had their influence, though mental and moral problems still more. Any way the fact that the modern sense of landscape beauty has become a power in life unknown to the ancient and mediæval world is patent. If the full and intelligent enjoyment of landscape is still confined to the few, yet the many talk about it and profess to seek it. They flock to all beautiful scenes, and, what is more remarkable, learn to find pleasure in such as are only stern and wild. The spell of landscape is upon all literature; the historian claims its aid; the traveller, in page after page deals in vivid description; poetry dwells with passionate delight upon the loveliness or grandeur of natural scenes; and

landscape painting takes a foremost place in the practice of art.

But were the long ages sightless and dumb amidst the landscape beauty of the world? Certainly not, and our object in the present and following chapter is to show that much was seen and felt in literature before it was fully expressed in art. The modern feeling for landscape has been defined as "a consciously sentimental view of natural phenomena." We have rather put it as a finding in scenery an original source of noble or pathetic emotion; but, however modern this feeling, however recent this discovery, we may be sure the germs lie deep in human nature. Admiration as well as wonder, more or less intelligent, must have accompanied the earliest perception of the thousandfold forms, colours, and objects of the natural world, and a certain sympathy would soon stir in the breast.

That landscape was indeed a potent factor in the education of man we have positive evidence in the fact that written language was derived from pictures of natural objects—objects which were often components of landscape. Thus in the oldest Chinese characters the tree, the mountain, the river, the cloud, the sun, and the dome of sky appear in rude symbol, and symbolising much beyond themselves. We may even recognise something of the poetry evoked in the very childhood of the race by the observation of natural phenomena, when we find in the oldest Cuneiform a representation of the setting sun, wherein two horizontal wedges stand for parallel bars of clouds near the horizon, and the whole "ideographic picture" forms a symbol of "ending" or rest.<sup>1</sup>

In pictorial characters, like these, of untold age and common to widely-separated systems of speech, we find art and literature at one; but it was an art of symbol rather than of representation, and its application to landscape lay dormant for long cycles of time. Meanwhile literature was gradually preparing the way. Poetry was sure to find a voice for the enjoyment, wherever it was felt, of the spectacle of nature, and to the poetry of literature, ancient and mediæval, we now turn for the signs of that enjoyment. Art in the end, though perhaps earlier than has usually been supposed, found voice for it too—sometimes, as we shall hope to show, taking up the strain in advance of literature, or when for a time literature had fallen into senility.

<sup>1</sup> See *History of the Alphabet*, by Dr. Isaac Taylor, vol. i. p. 52.

Nature-myths, whatever might be the necessities of language to which we are told they owe their origin, are due also to a poetical apprehension of nature. The beauty and victorious promise of the dawn, the tender loveliness of the evening twilight, are reflected in many a cunning myth. Clouds must have been watched by an imaginative gazer before they were likened to white flocks of sheep, to the cattle of the Sun-god, to maidens riding upon steeds—the winds—from whose manes there fell

“dew in the deep dales,  
And on the high trees, hail.”

Or again, when they are likened, as they lie level at sundown, to swans upon a lake sailing in single file. One of the most recent of the world's poets has sung of the “breeze” that

“flung  
The lilies to and fro, and said  
The dawn, the dawn, and died away,”

but no less truly had that preluding breath been noticed by those who described the winged Hermes leading on the day. Mythologic stories all over the world, and varying with the zones, coloured now with southern, now with northern nature, now dealing with the conquering sun, now with stormy winds, now with gracious summer on the earth, now with cruel winter, are all pictures by primeval man of nature—nature as Titian saw it and as Turner loved it.

But the persuasion that hidden powers were at work amidst all the phenomena of the outward world rendered landscape a scene of mysterious or curious awe, rather than a spectacle of beauty or sublimity in itself; and though, when the myths were all crystallised, and had peopled earth and heaven with definite beings of human semblance, as we find in the Homeric period, this mystery had changed its character, still landscape was not a subject for its own sake; it was the sphere of the Immortals, and in relation to man but a background, a playground, a workplace, and an endless repertory of simile.

Homer is in this way graphic enough, and affords delightful evidence that the changeful effects of wind and cloud and sun upon field, mountain, and sea (especially upon the latter) were accurately observed and enjoyed by him. A landscape worthy of any pencil is struck off in the lines—

“As when the king of lightnings, Jove, dispels  
From some huge eminence a gloomy cloud,  
The groves, the mountain tops, the headland heights,  
Shine all, illumined from the boundless heaven.”

*Iliad*, xvi. 297.—COWPER'S TRANS.

This sudden disclosure of the forms of hills or crags against the sky, one of the most imposing effects in scenery, had evidently caught the attention of the bard, for he repeats the incident with the variation of suddenness in the famous night scene rendered by Tennyson—

“And every height comes out, and jutting peak  
And valley, and the immeasurable heavens  
Break open to the highest.”

When he spoke of the departing Hector in day-bright arms,  
white plume, and white scarf as

“conspicuous as the height  
Of some snow-crested mountain,”

*Iliad*, xiii. 754.—COWPER.

Homer must have thought a snow-covered mountain a noble object. And he must have known and felt something of the powers astir among the mountains when he speaks of the hero again in the same book (line 136) as rushing into battle like a boulder loosened by heavy rains, that crashes down the mountain side, leaping high in air, while the woods around echo till it reaches the plain, “and then for all its haste it rolls no further.” But he is most at home among the wild coast waves, watching the

“fervent blore

Of th' east and south winds ; when they break from Jove's clouds and are borne  
On rough backs of th' Icarian seas,”

*Iliad*, ii. 144.—CHAPMAN.

or observing with thorough pictorial perception how

“Out at sea first, the wave lifts up its crest,  
And then breaking on the coast roars mightily,  
And advancing arched upon the headlands  
Lifts itself to a head, and spues afar the salt foam.”

It is he too who from some “look-out” has seen

“a cloud advancing o'er the sea  
Beneath the west wind's breath . . .  
. . . black as pitch, it sweeps along  
O'er the dark face of ocean, bearing on  
A hurricane of rain.”

*Iliad*, iv. 275.—LORD DERBY.

These and many others are striking landscape effects, and justify Dr. Shairp's assertion that Homer was not so insensible as Mr. Ruskin would imply to the wild beauty of nature; still it must be observed that in all such allusions there is no dwelling upon the scene as in itself suggestive of emotion, nor is there any sense of the pathos of nature. They are similes brought in only to illustrate human action—the port, the movement of the heroes, or of the hosts they led. Further, and it is a curious point, there is small notice of colour. Occasionally we come across a “gray” shore, and a gray or gray-green (*γλαυκη*) sea, “violet” or wine-coloured waves, but, as Mr. Gladstone asserts, no orange, green, or even blue are to be recognised in the descriptions. There are whiteness and brightness, gloom and blackness; and these applying to objects and separate parts of the landscape rather than to the landscape itself, which indeed never stretches to a large horizon.

In the *Odyssey* the wanderings of the hero in various lands necessarily led to some direct descriptions of landscape, and it is these that have provoked Mr. Ruskin to say that “every Homeric landscape intended to be beautiful is composed of a fountain, a meadow, and a shady grove.” Perhaps if for beautiful we substituted “habitable” we should obtain a more correct notion of the poet's feeling, while this word would describe a style of landscape very widely admired and prevailing through a vast extent of time both in literature and in art. And if in these days the same quality is still charming to multitudes, it is not surprising that in early ages it should have been supremely so, for it was then comparatively rare—the exception amidst the wildernesses. Wild nature could only be thoroughly enjoyed when the eye became fatigued with order and culture, and safety was sufficiently secured. So, though as our great landscape critic has pointed out, two chief elements of scenery—woods and rocks—are in these poems continually referred to, it is not their beauty that attracts, but their comfortableness. In the wood, though the entanglement of branches is described with almost a painter's eye, yet it is the comfortable look after the forlorn wastes of the sea, or the shelter of the boughs, or the soft warm bed of fallen leaves, that moves the poet. The rocks, too, have their one commendableness as they form a harbour for ships, or provide a cave for boats to be run into. We get it all in one quotation (adopting Mr. Ruskin's rendering). In the Cyclops country “they have soft marshy meadows near the sea, and a good rich crumbling



ploughing land, giving fine deep crops and vines always giving fruit." Then "a port so quiet that they have no need of cables in it; and at the head of the port a beautiful clear spring, just under a cave, and aspen poplars all round it." Now there is undeniable beauty in some of the features of such a scene, but that, we take it, had little to do with the poet's admiration, which fastened upon it as a choice, cheerful, and safe bit of liveable country.

Of true landscape in the *Odyssey* there is very little. Ulysses climbs indeed a rocky point and sees in the distant plain the smoke that rises from Circe's palace embosomed in "the gloom of trees and thickets;" it is certainly a definite picture, but, characteristically, there is no colour; there is no recognition of the scene as spread in richness and in summer glory far and wide within the circling hills, and soaring in purple harmonies into the azure sky. Nor does Homer dwell upon the careless natural beauty of sequestered spots—such for instance as we shall find frequently described in Dante. But the fact that his hero visited wild shores, wandered in strange lands, and encountered the vicissitudes of the sea, must have stirred the imagination of his readers, and indeed we find that these adventures furnished eventually the most popular subjects for the landscape-art of the ancients.

Homer, in general, was not in advance of his age any more than Hesiod, who, though he deals in his *Works and Days* with the open country, does so entirely in a utilitarian sense; he is more concerned with his husbandman's calendar than anything else. The fairest sight to him is

"The ripe harvest of the teeming ground,"

or,

"The rich glebe of inward-winding vales."

His famous description of a winter storm dwells more upon the sounds than the sights, and is full of commonplaces about the destruction wrought in the forests. The poet is not roused to any sense of grandeur.

Greek landscape we may fairly say was enjoyed more for use, for ease, for the evidence of cultivation, than for anything else, and Homer so far was a Greek. But he was a poet also, and a poet for all time, and among the signs of this supreme greatness is the power to break at will the bounds of ordinary or social thought, and hence those glimpses in Homer of the romantic side of nature—to use a



modern word for what has only found its full appreciation in modern times.

Of Sophocles we are told that he was the first who in some kind of scene-painting made use of landscape to enhance the effect of dramatic performances. This is a very significant fact, to which we shall presently return. We only point out now that looking through his works he has the landscape of his situations very clearly in his thought. It always forms part of his poetic vision. Yet for his personal tastes we do not get much farther than the fountain, the meadow, and the shady grove—

“The voiceless grass-grown grove,  
Where flows with constant stream  
The calm soft rivulet.”—Plumtree’s *Œdipus at Colonus*.

The olive, whose landscape charm is great, is certainly a favourite with him, and there is a notable passage rendered by Mr. Ruskin—“the sweetest resting-place” haunted perpetually by nightingales which sing “in the green glades and in the dark ivy, and in the thousand-fruited sunless and windless thickets”—thickets which the translator believes were rather glades or avenues among trees. But we can hardly call this a landscape admired for its own sake. It is still a place pleasant as a resting-place from its quiet and shade.

When we read in the *Phædrus* that Socrates was not accustomed in his walks to go outside the walls of Athens, saying, “Trees and fields tell me nothing; men are my teachers,” we know what to think of his love of scenery. And that the philosopher really cared very little for it is quite as much shown by the statement that on a notable occasion he was tempted out by expectation of discourse and the promise of shade, gentle breezes and grass on which to rest under a certain tall plane tree, with opportunity also on the way of cooling the unsandalled feet in the fresh waters of the Ilissus. Yet Plato’s perception of landscape beauty went, we may suppose, farther than this. Such a description as the following shows subtle observation of certain qualities in Mediterranean scenery:—“There the whole earth is made up of colours brighter far and clearer than ours; there is a purple of wonderful lustre, also the radiance of gold, and the white which is in the earth is whiter than any chalk or snow. Of these and other colours the earth is made up, and they are brighter and more in number and fairer than

the eye of man has ever seen, like light flashing among the other colours, and have a colour of their own which gives a sort of unity to the variety of earth."—*Phædo*, Jowett's Trans.

One Greek poet alone, Aristophanes, is by Mr. Ruskin associated with Homer for apprehension of noble landscape, and indeed his description of the clouds in the play of that name goes beyond Homer in largeness of view and discrimination of beauty. Mr. Collins translates it thus—

"Eternal clouds !  
 Rise we to mortal view,  
 Embodied in bright shapes of dewy sheen,  
     Leaving the depths serene  
 Where our loud-sounding Father Ocean dwells  
 For the wood-crowned summits of the hills :  
     Thence shall our glance command  
 The beetling crags which sentinel the land,  
     The teeming earth,  
     The crops we bring to birth ;  
 Thence shall we hear  
 The music of the ever-flowing streams,  
 The low deep thunders of the booming sea."

*Clouds*, l. 275-284.

We might have found this in Shelley. The picture of the clouds resting upon the summits of the wood-crowned hills, with the sea pulsating far beneath at the foot of the beetling crags,<sup>1</sup> is of almost the highest order of landscape beauty. But such a picture is rare for Aristophanes, rarer still in others ; and as hills wooded to the top are not mountains, this scene does not include what to us is the grandest element of scenery. Mountains to the Greeks were still the mysterious dwelling-places of the gods they had been to earlier races, and were so far beyond the range of their work-a-day landscape.

Some two hundred years later than Aristophanes, Greek literature bore its last rich fruit in the *Idylls* of Theocritus. Although the founder of that pastoral poetry which ran so long a course through so many literatures, his *Idylls* must not be confounded with it. They drew their inspiration directly from scenes of rural life in the poet's native Sicily, and took their form from the ancient songs of

<sup>1</sup> To this it has been objected that "beetling crags" seems to be a picturesque suggestion hardly warranted by the original ; "far seen look-out places," "*Τηλεφανεῖς σκορίας*," may include beetling crags, but the phrase does not necessarily imply them. If not, much of the landscape effect comes, it must be confessed, from the modern feeling of the translator.

shepherds. Descriptions indeed are few, and show not much variety, but the oak woods and shady fountains, the cornfields and the pastures, the seashore with its caves, and the mountain-top of Ætna, come constantly into view, and are touched with infinite grace.

“Near by, a fountain murmured from its bed,  
A cavern of the nymphs : elms overhead,  
And poplars rustled ; and the summer-keen  
Cicadæ sung aloft amid the green ;  
Afar the tree-frog in the thorn-bush cried ;  
Nor larks nor goldfinches their song denied ;  
The yellow bees around the fountains flew ;  
And the lone turtle-dove was heard to coo :  
Of golden summer all was redolent,  
And of brown<sup>1</sup> Autumn.”—*Id.* 7.

Elsewhere the poet thinks with pleasure of the spot

“Where the thick oaks stand round the shepherd’s seat.”

He pictures

“A rugged rock and fisher old ;”

and the association of rugged life with rugged nature is noticeable. Again, while it is the fisherman’s gear that makes up the greater part of the charming picture in the twenty-first *Idyll* of the two old men sleeping in their wattled hut, still it is “where on all sides the sea would gently float up, even to the narrow cabin.” Then he gives us a genuine bit of Sicilian scenery in the lines (*Id.* 11)—

“From the white snow, its waters cool and clear  
Thick-wooded Ætna sends ;”

if indeed it was the spectacle of the snow and the woods he was thinking of rather than the special coolness of the water.

An eye for the picturesque, a delight in the simple scenes of nature, are very evident in Theocritus ; this delight became the source of a fresh and living stream of poetry, and his advent forms therefore an era in the history of landscape in literature. The pastoral leaves out of sight the large and grand in scenery ; it does not care for the romantic, but it deals lovingly, especially in the

<sup>1</sup> This hint of colour is absent in the original, which speaks only of “breathing the incense of fruit-time.” It is curious that we should still trace this deficiency in Greek perception of landscape. The passage quoted from the *Phædo* seems exceptional in this respect, but it has more reference to lustre, radiance, the flashing of light, and general brightness, than to colour.

hands of its founder, with some picturesque features. So far it is an advance upon the purely utilitarian view of nature which distinguishes so much of the earlier Greek literature.

But the pastoral speedily degenerated; adopted for the most part by poets of the city rather than the country, and belonging to periods of high civilisation, an artificial note is presently apparent, and when the fanciful Arcadia was invented truth to nature vanished. Arcadia has lived in verse not for its scenery, but for its shepherds and shepherdesses, their loves and their revels. It is true that the meadows and woodlands were necessary as appropriate surroundings for these ideal folk, and a poet's love for the pastoral may be supposed to owe something to his love for sweet nature; but it was not for sweet nature's sake that the pastoral was sung, and its influence, as time went on, only hindered the true appreciation of landscape.

We must now ask what was the Latin feeling for landscape? To this the noblest of Roman poets must be our guide. Lucretius could not have been the poet he was had he not been a Roman, one who might be called "even more than a type of the greatest Roman qualities,"<sup>1</sup> and one who possessed especially that clear perception of the reality of things, and firm adherence to it, which gave to Rome the empire of the world. Hence his grand and fearless outlook upon Nature. Yet Lucretius was one by himself, and one whose influence was only slowly felt. In his lifetime he must have been much of a solitary, frequenting, as his great poem shows, the seashore—noticing the shells, watching the gulls—and "the sea that, breaking with mighty sweeps, dashes up the briny spray from its blue waves"; anon he is haunting lonely mountains and listening to their echoes; observing clouds and storms and the track of lightning; wandering in woods, and noticing the "dripping rocks, with drops oozing from the green moss over them";<sup>2</sup> or strolling "amongst the tender willows and the grass fresh with dew"; or seeking the brink of "rivers gliding with brimming stream past their banks."

There is in Lucretius a sense of wild uncared for beauty which

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Sellar's *Roman Poets*.

<sup>2</sup> These and other prose translations from Lucretius are from Mr. Munro. We may compare the last with a pleasant poetical rendering by Mr. Mallock—

"sweet waters gushed from out the ground  
In living streams, and on the damp rocks fell—  
The damp rocks, green with many a mossy stain."

distinguishes him from Homer, whom yet he so far resembles that he takes more note of movement and action in nature than of form or colour. Profoundly melancholic though he was, he likewise finds no pathos in nature—to him the great result of eternal law, exact, remorseless. The great distinction lies in this, that with the Roman poet “nature in her power, life, order, immensity and beauty” was the real subject of his epic. Of nature he is always taking the largest views and the closest.

Thus this great expounder of “natural things” set himself a far other task than to invent dialogues for swains as they sat under the oaks. If he differs from Homer he is far greater than Theocritus. It is no ideal land he deals with—no golden age such as earlier poets fancied; but he sternly depicts savage man, as he held him to have been at first, roaming the wilderness; for of the wilderness Lucretius had no fear; it was only one of the “things” of nature to him. From this condition of savage life he traces the gradual progress of mankind in civilisation, taught only by natural sights and sounds, not by gods or heroes, till the discovery of gold ruins all. Yet all may still be cured by the teaching of nature, whose phenomena he portrays with wonderful vigour, of course utterly discarding supernatural machinery—“the wind,” he says, “is but troubled air”; and so we come to a description of clouds which sometimes “tinge the parts around with swiftly diffused light,”<sup>1</sup> or which “are piled high above one another with extraordinary effect,”<sup>2</sup> for we must not, he says, be misled by the appearance from below where we cannot see “how high they are built up”—

“For do but note what time the storm-wind, wild,  
Comes carrying clouds like mountains through the air,  
Or, on the mountains’ selves the clouds are piled  
Motionless, and each wind in its lair,  
Then may you mark those mountain masses proud  
And huge caves built of hanging rocks of cloud.”—MALLOCK.

He is indeed never tired of clouds, their caverned hollows, their thunders, their pitchy darkness, “when they stain the glorious skies with sudden night,” and as they not only envelop mountains but sweep over the sea. In all this, and particularly in the lines quoted, we cannot help some comparison with the cloud-chorus song of Aristophanes. In the latter there is no doubt far higher poetic feeling, and a sense of enjoyment of the spectacle as spectacle,

<sup>1</sup> Watson’s Trans., p. 252.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, p. 253.

which is not much apparent in Lucretius; nevertheless, there is in the Roman poet a great advance towards that exactness of observation which is necessary to a true appreciation of landscape, and especially necessary to art; while again the Roman is clearly one to whom gloom and storm, the wild and the solitary, are as welcome as the beautiful.

Catullus died young, some ten years later than Lucretius. His genius, like that of Lucretius, distinctively Roman, had scarcely time to do more than flower with wonderful promise, but shows that delight in scenes of natural beauty or grandeur which in the older poet was overpowered by his philosophy. Catullus has celebrated the loveliness of Sirmio on the shore of the lake of Garda, where he possessed a patrimonial estate, in lines that show a discriminating perception of landscape beauty—

“Sirmio, thou fairest far beneath the sky  
Of all the isles, and jutting shores, that lie  
Deeply embosomed in calm inland lake,  
Or where the waves of the vast ocean break.”—MARTIN.

That he not only enjoyed the prospect from his villa-gardens, but sought nature in her solitudes, is shown by several passages in which mountain incidents are referred to. From Sirmio, indeed, he might have often seen the clouds resting upon a snow-capped summit flee away before the wind, of which he makes use in his “*Peleus and Thetis*”; but it was in some remoter climbing that he came upon the

“Clear stream from mossy stone that leaps  
Far up among the hills, and wimpling down  
By wood and vale, its onward current keeps  
To lonely hamlet, and to stirring town.”  
*Ad Allium*, v. 56.—MARTIN.

What, however, we have chiefly to remark in Catullus is his passion for the sea. He would hardly have expressed so much affection for his yacht had he not been specially open to the charm and wonder of the ocean. Here is a perfect picture of the waste of waters when their charm is greatest—

“As when at early dawn the western breeze  
Into a ripple breaks the slumbering seas,  
Which, gently stirred, move slowly on at first  
And into gurglings low of laughter burst;

Anon, as fresher blows the rising blast,  
 The waves crowd onwards, faster and more fast,  
 Floating away till they are lost to sight  
 Beneath the glow of the empurpled light."<sup>1</sup>

*Peleus and Thetis*, 270.—MARTIN.

Perhaps in his love of the sea, with its "white crests" and "flakes of foam," "its wide and waste expanse," he was more the Byron of classic poetry than any other we could name; while it is of him also we are reminded when he speaks of "giant mountains" and of "hanging forest shades" and the "lone peak of Caucasus." Catullus looks at nature with the gaze of a kindling imagination, and the fact that his "Bacchus and Ariadne" supplied a subject for Titian unites him singularly with one of the great founders of landscape art.

Virgil, whose *Bucolics* appeared very soon after Catullus had resigned his pen, is said to have been born on the day of the death of Lucretius, and the later poet drew much from that great observer of nature. It is also true that Virgil imitated Theocritus in the pastoral, but he was not one of those imitators who dealt only with the conventional Arcadia; on the contrary, he has been called, and justly, "a great master of landscape;"<sup>2</sup> as such his observation of scenery was too close to allow of vagueness, even when depicting an imaginary land. A passage like the following in the ninth Eclogue,

"from where yon hills  
 Begin to rise, and gently slope again  
 Down to the stream, where the old beech-trees throw  
 Their ragged time-worn tops against the sky,"<sup>3</sup>—CONINGTON.

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<sup>1</sup> "Empurpled" is a touch of colour scarcely warranted by the original, which describes rather "the indistinct sun." Colour in the poets was not yet.

<sup>2</sup> Gilpin's *River Wye*, p. 38. In illustration of this designation he quotes, "stabat acuta silex," etc.—*Æneid*, viii. 233.

<sup>3</sup> "quâ se subducere colles  
 Incipiunt mollique jugum demittere clivo  
 Usque ad aquam et veteris jam fracta cacumina fagi."

The sense given to "subducere" by Professor Conington may be objected to as strained and unsuitable to the context, but the criticism does not affect the bearing of the passage on our subject.

Eustace, in his *Classical Tour*, vol. i. p. 218, says that in the first and ninth Eclogues the poet certainly means to describe some of the features of his own little possession, and by these features it is evident that it lay at the foot, or in the immediate neighbourhood of, the hills not far from Valleggio (about fifteen miles above Mantua), near which town they begin to *subside* and gradually lose themselves in the immense plain of Mantua. "On no other part of the banks of the Mincio are to be discovered



which, in fact, describes his own small estate upon the Mincio, has for that reason an air of reality and local truth which ordinary pastoral poets have never cared to introduce. Further, in the mention of the "ragged time-worn tops" of the old beeches there is, if we mistake not, a perception of the picturesque in that which is old and weather-worn, with which the Greek mind (unless a few hints in Theocritus form an exception) never learned to sympathise. If so, it is a notable advance in landscape feeling. Had the words "against the sky" been in the original, the passage would have been still more remarkable, but that painter-like and pathetic touch is the addition of the translator, and its distinctively modern character shows where the ancient mind halted.

There is something, however, of romantic and pathetic suggestion in the lines—

"E'en as beneath the doubtful moon, when niggard light doth fall  
Upon some way amid the woods,"

*Æneid*, vi. 270-272.—MORRIS.

and it marks also individual observation. That was written by one who had himself wandered through such a forest by flitting moonlight, and had also seen how (as he goes on to say) "obscure night deprives objects of their colour." Colour, therefore, begins to be something looked for. That this perception, a chief element in "the faculty of pictorial sight," was especially Virgilian, has been pointed out by Mr. Hamerton, who quotes in illustration the description of the bull that, "with his snow-white side resting upon the soft hyacinth, ruminates the pale herbage under the black ilex."<sup>1</sup> Here there are not only "the white bull, the dark ilex, and the middle tint of herbage, which is called pale by comparison with the tree," but colour in the soft hyacinth.

either the 'bare rocks' that disfigured the farm of Tityrus, or the 'towering crag' that shaded the pruner as he sang, or the 'vine-clad grotto' where the shepherd reclined, or 'the bushy cliff,' whence the browsing goats seemed as if suspended, or the 'lofty mountains which in the evening cast their protracted shadows over the plain.'"

<sup>1</sup> "Ille, latus niveum molli fultus hyacintho  
Ilice sub nigra pallentes ruminat herbas."

I may here quote a remark of a friend after reading the MS. of this chapter. "The result of my comparison has been totally in favour of the classics as against their translators; the improvements are to me like Claude's ruins, very much in the way; there is nothing like the old use of adjectives for local truth. . . . Ovid calls the Phasis 'swift and muddy;' it is both, but the conjunction is so unusual he must have known what he was talking about."



Returning to the striking description of the region of the dead that has given us the "doubtful moon," we have also the picture of the "huge dark elm" (*ulmus opaca ingens*—*Æneid*, vi. 282-284) that "stood in the midst, spreading its boughs and aged arms abroad." Here again not only the picturesque but the romantic element in landscape has caught the imagination of the poet; he had seen that aged elm under some lurid evening light, and he never forgot it. Certainly, too, it is this aspect of scenery that moved him to speak of "Father Apennine, when through his glistening<sup>1</sup> holm oaks he murmurs low, and, lifting himself with snowy peak to the winds of heaven, rejoices" (*Æneid* xii. 703). Principal Shairp claims this passage as showing that the "power of the hills was for a moment upon him,"—that "mountain rapture" undreamt of before and for many a succeeding age. Yet perhaps for pictorial effect none is more significant than the passage in the first Eclogue (83, 84), which attracted Gilpin's attention, and which may be rendered literally if not poetically:—

"Now the smoke rises from farm chimneys tall,  
And longer shadows from high mountains fall."

The wide sub-Alpine landscape is here spread before us as it lay around Virgil musing at eventide on the banks of the Mincio.

The picture of the Tiber, up which the wanderers sail when "the sea was reddening with the dawn," is, as Mr. Collins points out, perfectly different from anything in Homer, who cares much for his hero, little for his landscape. "Not so Virgil: with him we feel the cool breeze, we see the glancing shadow of the trees upon the river, we hear the flutter of the startled birds, and the long plash of the oars in the water." But here a curious point arises: Did Virgil mean by "*Viridesque secant placido æquore silvas*" to describe the vessels as cleaving in their passage the reflection of the trees in the water? Mr. Conington thinks that he did; if so, it is a very pictorial effect, but, as he adds, "may be too modern a thought for Virgil." It is in such "thoughts" that we trace again and again, either by their absence or rare and unexpected presence in ancient literature, the subtle difference that has arisen in the modern observation of external nature—a difference which mainly turns upon a delicate perception, first of its facts and then of their pathos.

<sup>1</sup> The picturesque word "*coruscis*," in the original, is the quiver of the leaves in a wood, with special reference to the glancing of light on the under side of leaves peculiar to olives, ilexes, and willows.

But for this very reason that which may be too modern a thought for poets of the ancient world may not be too modern a thought for Virgil, who, in "the mournful wonder with which he regards the contrast between the hopes and fates of men,"<sup>1</sup> and in his brooding aspiration after a nobler and serener time, stood on the verge of decaying paganism, almost on the threshold of the Christian temple. This is the poet, distinguished for a tone of moral sensitiveness new in the ancient world, who became the first "great master of landscape," and of whom the writer just quoted has said that he seemed, "like Wordsworth, singled out as the poet and priest of nature."<sup>2</sup>

Let us turn to another poet of this rich Roman period. Horace shows much genuine appreciation of the beautiful, perhaps of the grand, in landscape. As a child wandering over his father's farm he learned the delights of country life, and they are real country scenes he pictures. He delights to see the

"crystal rills  
Come dancing down with tinkling feet from the sky-dividing hills."  
Epode 16.—MARTIN.

He enjoys no less to

"Stand on the cliff at distance and survey  
The stormy sea-gods' wild Titanic play."  
Epist.—CONINGTON.

And has noticed, very much as Virgil had noticed, how at evening

"the sun began to change  
The shadows through the mountain range."  
Book iii., Ode 6.—MARTIN.

Still, when Horace elaborates a rural scene, one is not quite sure that it is the charm of landscape which chiefly enthralls him. There is clearly much of the mere luxury of the senses when he pictures that famous "happy one"—

"Sometimes beneath an old oak's shade,  
Sometimes on the thick grass he lies,  
And while the clink of the cascade  
Joins with the grove's bird-melodies,  
And tune by purling brooklet played,  
Slumber lights gently on his eyes."  
Epode 2.—THORNTON.

<sup>1</sup> Myers' *Essays*, vol. i., "Virgil."

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 160.

Or again—

“Where poplar pale and pine-tree high  
 Their profitable shadows spread  
 Entwined, and panting waters try  
 To hurry down their zigzag bed,  
 Bring wine and scents and roses' bloom.”<sup>1</sup>—CONINGTON.

In all this and much else we detect more of an eye for a picnic than for nature. We miss that sort of feeling which gave us “the broken tops of the old beech trees,” and we miss still more such glimpses of the wild, the vast, the solemn, as are found both in Lucretius and Catullus. Among the poets of the empire it is sociable not romantic scenery that inspires their verse, and in Horace not a little the pleasure of the landed proprietor.

Tibullus, however, is ranked by Professor Sellar with Virgil as expressing “that modern mood of passion in which the heart longs to exchange the familiar life of civilisation for the rougher life of the fields, and to share some humble cottage and the daily occupations of peasant life with the beloved object.” Yet the melancholy of Tibullus was, we suspect, better cheered by the wine-cup and a wanton ditty he took with him from town, than by the country scenes he talks so much about. Did he enter into the soothing power of their answering sympathy?

Still it is certain that cultivated Romans really enjoyed the country, and in a more genuine way than the Greeks. The Roman gentleman, whether philosopher or poet (and a man of breeding was bound to be more or less one or the other), required the learned leisure of a charming seclusion, with a few choice friends for company, and the country villa became a great institution. Such a thing was only possible where a settled state of society rendered the outside country safe, and in Imperial days the sunny slopes of hills, and the curving shores of bays, were crowded with these luxurious retreats, placed, many of them, in the most lovely spots to be found.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Quo pinus ingens albaque populus” (*Odes*, ii. 3).

<sup>2</sup> Tibur and Tusculum are two of the most romantic sites about Rome. Pompey fixed his villa on the lovely knoll whence travellers up the Via Appia caught their first glimpse of the Capitol, while Domitian had his terraced garden above on a still grander site, whence he could look down at pleasure on the coasts of Latium or the bowl of the Alban lake. Different from these, and of rather singular significance, is the site of Nero's summer palace above Subiaco, in the wildest and most strikingly semi-Alpine bit of scenery within fifty miles of Rome.—D. W. F.

“Men,” says M. Aurelius, “seek retreats for themselves, houses in the country, on sea-shores and mountains; and thou too (he adds to himself) art wont to desire such things very much.”—(Book x., c. 3.)

Yet there was probably little, except in select souls, beyond the enjoyment of an ornate habitable landscape. Humboldt doubts how far the phrases of Cicero respecting the delights of solitude express a real feeling for nature, even though in certain disappointed and tearful moods the great orator of the courts plunged into a thick rough forest and did not leave it till evening. We may doubt it the more when, after saying “nothing can be more pleasant than this villa, the shore, the prospect of the sea, in short everything that is around me,” he adds, “yet it is not worth while to swell a letter with such trifles.”

The younger Pliny did fill letters about such things, and we may judge from the full and minute descriptions of his numerous villas that the general taste in his day was surprisingly like that of cultivated Englishmen in our own. Gardens, terraces, colonnades are arranged to perfection, and not only for their own immediate advantages but for the prospect, and it is a prospect which includes the same points of interest that would be appreciated by ourselves. “O sea and shore!” exclaims the statesman, “true scene for study and contemplation, with how many thoughts do you inspire me!” Nay, Pliny’s house actually possessed a tower built for the purpose of an extensive prospect, and he speaks of a room with windows as large as doors, “from which you might imagine you saw three different seas;” while from another point “you look through a colonnade into the court and see the mountains in the distance.” This was at his villa on the coast, seventeen miles from Rome. In Tuscany he owned a property still more delightfully situated; he says of it—“the character of the country is very beautiful. Picture to yourself an immense amphitheatre such as only nature could create. Before you lies a broad plain, bounded by a range of mountains whose summits are covered with tall and ancient woods which are stocked with all kinds of game for hunting. The lower slopes of the mountains are planted with underwood . . . below these on the mountain side is a continuous stretch of vineyards terminated by a belt of shrubs; then you have meadows and the open plain.<sup>1</sup> You would

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Davies, in his interesting book *The Pilgrimage of the Tiber*, says the site of this villa was near Città di Castello on the Upper Tiber above Perugia.

be charmed by taking a view of the country from one of the neighbouring mountains. You would fancy that you were looking on the imaginary landscape of a first-rate artist."<sup>1</sup> This distinct allusion to landscape-art is remarkable; we shall understand better what it means when our subject brings us to the landscape wall-decoration, of which Pompeii has supplied several examples.

Pliny quite understood the charms of Como, where this wealthy patrician had several villas. One of them was "built along the bend of a little bay;" another "stood upon a cliff which runs out so as to form two bays . . . and commands a wider prospect over the lake." Yet all this may not imply more than the enjoyment of lovely surroundings, soft shades, soft breezes, soft aërial distances, "properties" which have attracted a Taglioni to the same spot. How far was it the poetry of the prospect that attracted the Roman? That is a question difficult to answer. He describes, indeed, the source of the Clitumnus in a way which indicates a taste for the picturesque—"the banks on each side are shaded with great numbers of verdant ash and poplar trees, as distinctly reflected in the stream as if they were actually existing in it."<sup>2</sup> Yet on the other hand he tells us that when he went hunting he took a note-book with him because "not only does bodily exercise contribute to enliven the imagination . . . but the solitude of the woods around you and the perfect silence observed in hunting strongly incline the mind to thought." It was not, then, so far as we know, the avenues among the tall trees, the glints of light above and below, the sudden outlooks that enchanted him, but he was pleased with the solitude and silence.

Yet upon the whole, comparing the Roman with the Greek mind in this particular, we may recognise the growth of a larger, more definite, and more sympathetic appreciation of landscape. And as the deep substratum of everything distinctively Roman seems to have been the Etruscan element, it is possible that here too that influence may be traced. It has been remarked that a "peculiar vein of imaginative emotion was called forth by the appearance of strength, stability, order, or immensity."<sup>3</sup> This reminds us of an Etruscan characteristic. Again the Etruscan doctrine of spirits (though certainly it did not affect Lucretius) was just such as would incline to a somewhat melancholy or romantic outlook upon landscape, while

<sup>1</sup> See *Pliny's Letters*, Ancient Classics Series.

<sup>2</sup> See Davies' description of the Clitumnus in his *Pilgrimage of the Tiber*.

<sup>3</sup> Sellars' *Roman Poets*.

the alleged Etruscan feeling for colour would disclose much unseen by the Greeks.<sup>1</sup> But, apart from this predisposition of character, the Roman turn for subduing nature by roads and aqueducts, and the amount of travelling imposed upon the masters of the world, bringing them into association with wild places and vast tracts of country, must needs enlarge their ideas upon landscape, and diversify their tastes. Nevertheless that they should feel the beauty of the Alpine snows, or of glacier ice, or the romance of a country which, like Helvetia, cost so much time and trouble upon every transit, is too much to expect.

<sup>1</sup> See Taylor's *Etruscan Researches*.

## CHAPTER III.

### LANDSCAPE IN LITERATURE—MEDIÆVAL AND TO THE END OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

Hebrew poetry—St. Basil—St. Gregory of Nyssa—St. Chrysostom—Ausonius—Claudian—Indian poetry—Troubadours and Minnesingers—The early Romances—Dante—Petrarch—Boccaccio—Lorenzo di Medici—Leonardo da Vinci—Ariosto—Bembo—Aretino—Tasso—Camœns—Chaucer—Raleigh—Sidney—Spenser—Shakespeare—Cowley—Milton—Summary—Relations between landscape-art and literature.

AT last the Roman world lay dying, and we must now turn to a stream of thought issuing from a remote past which was to new-create the world and bring with it a new conception of nature.

Somewhere about a thousand years before the battle of Marathon, a people marched out of Egypt to receive a law and a religion amidst the solitudes of a mountain region. It was an experience they never forgot, even after they had long dwelt in a land of choice natural beauty in hill, and stream, and verdure, where the great sea rolled on the west, and a vast pastoral wilderness stretched to the eastern horizon. Among this people and in this land arose a poetry unequalled in literature for grandeur, beauty, tenderness, and moral depth, the keynote of which may be given in the words, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof."

This is a strain foreign to the thought of both Greece and Rome, but with the Hebrews it pervades every utterance about natural scenery. Let us quote Humboldt:—"Hebrew poetry dwells less on details of phenomena, and loves to contemplate great masses. Nature is portrayed not as self-subsisting or glorious in her own beauty, but ever in relation to a higher, an over-ruling, a spiritual power. . . . The lyrical poetry of the Hebrews in its descriptions of Nature is essentially in its very subject grand and solemn."

There is indeed a great Presence in the Hebrew world of nature. "Let the whole earth be filled with His glory" is the loud acclaim of Hebrew song. "He maketh the clouds His chariot, He walketh



upon the wings of the wind ;" thunder is the utterance of His voice ; lightning-flames are His messengers ; " the sea is His, and He made it ;" " He has set fast the mountains, and the strength of the hills is His also ;" " the little hills rejoice on every side ; the pastures are clothed with flocks, the valleys are covered over with corn, they shout for joy, they also sing" before the Lord. Every element of noble landscape is here, including mountains, and it is remarkable that with the Hebrews they take very much the place they do with the moderns as images of greatness and power. Many passages attest this ; " His righteousness is like the great mountains" is enough to quote. But this wonderful prevision arose from the fact that with this people all nature was ranged, not, as with the Greeks, around man as the centre, but before the Lord—the Lord of the whole earth. It is therefore with a fearlessness equal to that of Lucretius that the sublimest phenomena are surveyed, though not because they are only phenomena, but because they are all the works and signs of " the Lord." For the same reason there is not a trace of that later Roman feeling which finds in nature a place only for pensive, for studious, or luxurious retirement ; a background, like its painted semblance on villa-walls, for high discourse, or perhaps for drunken orgies. No ; " the Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice," sang the Hebrew in his temple service, and in the light of that magnificent belief, though ready enough to find in the imagery of nature symbols of his own frail mortal existence, he looked upon all the landscape round, and " blessed the Lord at all times."

Yet this view of nature was considerably modified before it entered into European thought. It was not the Hebrew but the Christian idea which succeeded to that of pagan Rome, and then much of the joyousness had departed. Christianity was indeed inaugurated under the open heaven, amidst the fairest of landscapes. Upon a mountain side, rich in flowers, " the Lord " sat down and taught. On the shores of a beautiful lake He consorted with fishermen and spoke to the multitudes. He took His illustrations continually from natural scenes—the small town on the hill-top, the wide harvest of the plain, the vineyards, the nets upon the beach. He sought peace and communion with the Father of Spirits upon lonely mountain summits. Thus Christianity in its beginning was interwoven with scenes of nature, and has hallowed such scenes for evermore. But it deepened the sense of moral evil in the world ; it accepted adversity, trial, and discipline as conditions necessary to



the fulfilment of its objects; it regarded the whole creation as "groaning and travailing in pain," though awaiting a glorious deliverance; and its sense of this was intensified during its early history by experience of the woes of persecution. Thus, though retaining the fearlessness of the Hebrew faith in the outlook upon nature, there was not the joy. Yet we must remark that the wilderness, familiar to heroes and prophets of old as a refuge, is welcomed by the Christian not only as a needful retreat, but as a place for contemplation, and at last as a place of beauty, the beauty of wild nature and the open sky. This is a notable advance.

St. Basil in the fourth century, in a passage quoted by Humboldt, gives a charming description of his home in such a wilderness. "A high mountain, clothed with thick forest, is watered towards the north by fresh and ever-flowing streams, and at the foot of the mountain extends a wide plain which these streams render fruitful. The surrounding forest shuts me in as in a strong fortress. This wilderness is bounded by two deep ravines; on one side the river, precipitating itself foaming from the mountain, forms an obstacle difficult to overcome, and the other side is enclosed by a broad range of hills. My hut is so placed on the summit of the mountain that I overlook the extensive plain and the whole course of the Iris. . . . The river of my wilderness, which is more rapid than any I have seen, breaks against the jutting precipice, and throws itself foaming into the deep pool below—to the mountain traveller an object on which he gazes with delight and admiration. . . . How should I exchange this for any other place!"

But a passage still more appropriate for our purpose is that extracted by Humboldt from the writings of Gregory of Nyssa, the brother of Basil: "When," he says, "I behold each craggy hill, each plain clothed with fresh springing grass, the varied foliage with which the trees are adorned, at my feet the lilies to which Nature has given a double dower of sweet fragrance and of beauty of colour, and in the distance the sea, *towards which the wandering cloud is sailing*, my mind is *possessed with a sadness* which is not devoid of enjoyment." Where is the "wandering cloud" of Pliny? and above all, where in any Greek or Roman of the pagan time is this strange "sadness"? Have we not in this perception of the pathos of landscape entered another region of thought, one essential to the perfection of landscape-art?

But we must once more avail ourselves of Humboldt's researches

in this field. From Chrysostom he quotes:—"When thou lookest on the glittering buildings, if the ranges of columns would seduce thy heart, turn quickly to contemplate the vault of heaven and the open fields, with the flocks grazing by the water-side. Who but despises all that art can show whilst he gazes at early morn, and in the silence of the heart, on the rising sun, pouring his golden light upon the earth! Or when seated by the side of a fountain on the cool grass, or in the dark shade of thick foliage, his eye feeds the while on the wide-extended prospect far vanishing in the distance." There is something of the new pathetic feeling in this pleasure at beholding a "far-vanishing prospect," and the contrast between this passage and that in which Horace describes a similar retreat, and calls for wine and the garland to complete his satisfaction, is striking.

But the quotation is chiefly interesting for its mention of that influence which for long ages arrested the delight in nature so eloquently expressed by the "Golden Mouth." Chrysostom speaks of the seductions of art as compared with the divine appeal of nature, and the elaborate ecclesiasticism into which Christianity was now rapidly developing, led only to the pomp and circumstance of the basilica with its gorgeous but rigid art, and to the endless conflicts of councils.

Meanwhile, among some secular Latin writers certain curious indications of a feeling for landscape must not be overlooked. A Western poet of the fourth century, Ausonius, in a poem entitled "Mosella," shows remarkable observation of landscape detail, as in a description of the "wrinkled" mountain shapes reflected in the stream. Ausonius formed himself upon classic models, but, living under the ascendancy of Christianity, does not represent the true classic mind, any more than he does the Christian. Yet a new stream of tendency of possibly Christian origin seems to show itself in such a passage as the above.

The same may be said of Claudian, a poet of about the same date, whose perception of scenery possesses a certain undefinable modern character. There are symptoms in it at least of an enjoyment of effects in scenery, not apparent in the classic mind. Two passages illustrate this. In the poem on Venus reaching Milan (*De Nupt. Honor. et Mar.*), we have

"The close packed clouds withdraw, the Alps grow clear  
Under bright north winds, Venus drawing near."

The other (*Veneti favete montes*) is still more modern in flavour—

“Venetia’s mounts rejoice,  
Let sudden rosebeds blow  
To clothe the Alpine crest,  
Blush Alpine frosts and snow.”

But now came the anarchy, confusion, and bloodshed of the death-throes of the world’s empire. All the smiling Roman villas disappeared, and with them the refined delights of country life. The walled city became the only refuge for the ordinary man, and every city that could manage it set up for itself and lived within its own narrow horizon. Any one who could collect a sufficiency of followers built himself up in a castle and surrounded his castle with a moat. The great roads fell into decay, and travellers went armed and in companies hastening to reach shelter before nightfall. What opportunity was there for calm contemplation of landscape beauty? The “craggy hill” might hide the bandit, the plain might be a place of ambush, the sea—a “wandering cloud” might be seen sailing over its surface, but a pirate also! Clearly landscape was no longer a thing to admire, but rather to escape from.<sup>1</sup>

Yet as there are compensations everywhere, so here. Ecclesiasticism, which reared the Basilica, built also, in course of time, the monastery, into which the wild war without drove many choice souls for shelter. These retreats were naturally placed in secluded spots. Their occupants needed fish from the stream and the protection of a wilderness. So first the hermit’s cell or chapel, and presently abbey walls, graced many a charming reach of tree-shaded water; or, for greater safety, the monk climbed the mountain side, and among impending rocks reared his walls of peace and watched the rising or descending sun on the far horizon. For many of these men were of a contemplative cast of mind, familiar with the Hebrew psalms and with the writings of the Fathers, and breathed their larger spirit. They were students of philosophy, and, much alone with nature, opened their thoughts to physical science. Still it was the scholastic

<sup>1</sup> “The towns, the primitive elements of the Roman world, survived almost alone amidst its ruin. The rural districts became the prey of the barbarian. It was there that they established themselves with their men. It was there that they were about to introduce by degrees totally new institutions and a new organization, but till then the rural districts will occupy scarcely any place in society; they will be but the theatre of excursions, pillages, and misery.”—(Guizot, *History of Civilisation*.)

philosophy that was mainly developed in these retreats and in the universities that gradually arose. Logic was the only key of knowledge, and logic was a thing of the brain, not of the soul. It belonged emphatically to the "Schools," and the schools walled out nature, and walled in thought.

So the dark centuries went on, culminating, some say, in the seventh, others in the tenth, according as the gaze is directed on France and Germany or upon Italy and England. Availing ourselves of this pause, let us glance for a moment at another and most ancient literature, belonging to that dim East which has lived a life of thought so peculiarly its own.

The hymns of the Vedas embalm those grand nature-myths of which we have already spoken; but as it is the larger phenomena only, which draw forth adoring wonder, we miss the local colour so necessary to landscape, though some allusions to simple pastoral life suggest it. Afterwards, there is the era of epic poetry, heroes become the subject of national song, the language of adoration is exchanged for that of narrative, and local descriptions ensue. Here the forest becomes a principal scene; the robber and the hermit play a prominent part, and, throughout, natural scenery is not only lavishly depicted, but often with a remarkable perception of detail. Similes abound, and bespeak an eye for the pictorial effects of nature, as in one quoted by Sir W. Jones, where the mantle of the hero-god is said to "gleam like a dark blue cloud illumined with rainbows."

A third period, the dramatic, shows an increasing sensitiveness to the emotional in landscape, or, to put it differently, its apparent sympathy with human emotion. This sensitiveness is certainly shown by Kalidasa in the first century before Christ, and the chief poet of that age. He "represents with a master hand the influence which the aspect of Nature exercises on the minds and feelings of lovers," and entitles one of his plays the *Cloud Messenger*, since its subject is a passing cloud, to which the exiled lover confides his sorrows. Roman poetry, we fancy, shows no such tender association of the natural world with the human. It is Kalidasa too who places the scenery of his *Hero and the Nymph* amidst the Himalaya mountains, with their "ridgy ramparts and scattering clouds," who notices the changing effects of moonlight, refers to the evening fires of the herdsmen, and gives us, describing the descent of his super-

natural folk, such vivid glimpses of mountain phenomena as the following—

. . . “yonder, like clouds they roll  
Along the mountain cliffs ; now there alights  
A chief in gorgeous raiment, like the blaze  
Of lightning playing on the towering precipice.”

The whole poem is full of similes, surprising for the beauty and exactness of their references to romantic nature.

No Hindoo poet, however, can compare in landscape feeling with Bhavabhuti, a Brahman of Southern India, dating from the eighth century. Mr. Wilson considers this love of nature to be due to the poet's “early familiarity with the eternal mountains and forests of Gondwarra.” In a passage from *Malati and Madhava*, well known to all readers of Indian literature, he describes the view from a mountain summit—

“How wide the prospect spreads ! Mountain and rock,  
Towns, villages, and woods, and glittering streams ;  
There where the Para and the Sindhu wind,  
The towers and temples, pinnacles and gates  
And spires of Padmavati, like a city  
Precipitated from the skies, appear  
Inverted in the pure translucent wave.”

He remembers

“the lofty mountains  
That southward stretch, where Godavari  
Impetuous flashes through the dark deep shade  
Of skirting forests, echoing to his fury.”

In a style wonderfully modern he makes one of his characters say—

“My friend, behold awhile the beauties of this lake  
Where on its slender stem the lotus trembles  
Brushed by the passing swan. . . .  
Observe how smile the mountains, thickly set  
With budding kutajas, up to the very peaks  
Where stretches dark the canopy of clouds.”

Well might a German critic suspect an infusion of modern ideas till he had verified the correctness of the translation.<sup>1</sup>

But the day of the great Indian literature passed without affecting the progress of human thought in its contemplation of

<sup>1</sup> Schnaase, quoted by Woermann in his *Landschaft in der Kunst der Alten Völker*. Woermann, p. 58, goes on to say that “in other dramas of this author we find an enthusiastic feeling for landscape beauty equalling that of the example just given.”

natural scenery. It failed even, so far as can be known, to influence the pictorial art of India itself in this direction. We can only note the fact that there, in the venerable unknown East, had been developed a sympathy with natural scenery, or, as it has been well called, a "dim feeling of the oneness" between nature and the spirit of man, which the classic mind never or rarely experienced, and of which the Western nations knew little until recent times.

For later phases of Eastern poetry, and contemporary with that of mediæval Europe, we must look to Persia.

It is in character with the change of scene that the forest disappears, and with the grander features of landscape, the grandeur and pathos of imagination. Persian poetry deals with gardens, rose-bushes, fruit trees, sparkling fountains, and with the never-ending complaints of nightingale and rose. Arabic poetry, however, seems to have been of a somewhat higher cast; its Semitic character is shown in that it takes more note of the larger phenomena of nature. But Arabia is not Palestine, and the difference is seen not only in soil but in literature, and generally, we may say, that where, as in Saracenic Spain, the open country is arid, and beauty is confined to tracts which are as gardens of delight, there the poetry is that of the garden only; while if, as we are told, the poets of Cordova and Grenada came to spend their time in turning grammar into poetry, nature had clearly less and less to do with their inspiration.

To return to the course of Western thought. In the twelfth century arose the poetry of the Troubadours, in which, while the shepherd and shepherdess of the pastoral once more appear to conduct their never-ending amatory dialogue, the characteristic feature is the chivalric love-song, in which a worship of womankind, utterly different from anything in classic literature, breaks forth with passionate fervour. It is specially, even tediously, associated with the delights of spring among the fields and woods, and there is always a nightingale in the grove. The ladye-love of chivalry is a new creation, and however questionable may be the amours of which she is made the centre, she moves surrounded by some of the sweetest sights and sounds in nature. It is a great thing that in this new birth of poetry the sky is overhead, breezes stir in the trees, flowers bloom in the sward. It is a great change from the dark northern epics of blood and incest that filled the imaginations of the ruder tribes. But it is a somewhat artificial landscape. It



is bounded by the castle pleasaunce, its neighbouring lawns and groves, the woods in which the lord of the castle hunts. It has nothing to do either with the grander scenes of nature or with those of the farm in which the serf only is concerned. France led the way in this revival, and Germany followed: first with the rude grandeur of the epic *Helden Buch* and *Nibelungen Lied*, in which descriptions of scenery find small place, though what there is of it is of a wilder sort than the provençal poet cared for; and then with the abundant literature of the Minnesingers, the singers of love, where the constant mention of the "pleasant mead" and "gentle May," and such pretty incidents as the "dew glistening upon bells of heather," falling leaves, and snow upon the fields, indicate much tender feeling for nature, however subordinate to the sayings and doings of the amatory gentleman in the foreground. Then comes the wholesome satiric *Thier Epos*—or animal epic—in which fox and raven, goat and eagle, act their parts, and the woodland and the wild are the chief scenes.

Nor must the romances of which the stories of the court of Arthur in the twelfth century and Amadis de Gaul in the fourteenth are the type, be forgotten. When knights and damsels find the scene of their adventures among dark forests and lonely lakes, and wander over rugged mountains meeting the "Salvage man," not to speak of enchanters and giants, it is certain that the imagination of many readers must have been roused to picture such places. The forest was the great source of mystery, and some of its charm too must have been felt before, in *Palmerin of England*, it could be told how the Prince, to amuse his wife—"her person being somewhat overcharged with sickness"—"walked with her in the forest, for that he supposed the sight of the spreading trees and pleasant passages through the grassy groves would relieve her condition!"

Then there were the actual experiences of the mediæval knight, to whom, as Mr. Ruskin has it, "from Scottish moor to Syrian sand, the world was one great exercise ground or field of adventure. The staunch pacing of his charger penetrated the pathlessness of outmost forest, and sustained the sultriness of the most secret desert"—and of that baron whose loneliness has been pictured to us by the same hand, "nested on his solitary jut of crag . . . the village inhabited by his retainers straggling indeed about the slopes of the rocks at his feet, but his own dwelling standing gloomily

apart between them and the uncompanionable clouds, commanding from sunrise to sunset the flowing flame of some calm unvoyaged river, and the endless undulations of the untraversable hills." The thoughts of that man upon landscape, if he had any, must have differed widely from those of the Roman man of culture in his villa.

But whatever the thoughts of knight or baron amidst such scenes, we know those of one of the rare souls of the world in that rough time. Dante (1265-1321) had also wandered in many lands, and as he pondered his great poem, he brought the recollections of much travel to his aid, and was never afraid of the local and realistic in his descriptions. It has been pointed out by an able hand,<sup>1</sup> how in the *Commedia*, "local reminiscences abound: the scarred rocks of the Adige Valley, the waterfall of S. Benedetto, the crags of Pietra Pana and of S. Leo, which overlook the plains of Lucca and Ravenna; the 'fair river that flows among the poplars between Chiaveri and Sestri;' the marble quarries of Carrara, 'the rough and desert ways between Lerici and Turbia,' and those towery cliffs going sheer into the deep sea at Noli." Such references are due to the definite notes of a traveller upon the picturesque or striking in scenery, most of them, be it observed, referring to mountain or hill regions. For the exile, whether in secluded monasteries, or in the remote castles of his friends, was, we may believe, soothed in spirit by the surrounding mountain solitudes as he was not on the palace-stairs of Verona, or in the streets of Padua. How true to mountain effect is this:—

" But when a mountain's foot I reached, where closed  
The valley that had pierced my heart with dread,  
I looked aloft, and saw his shoulders broad  
Already vested with that planet's beam"—

meaning the ruddy vesture of the morning sun. Then the ascent

" over that lonely steep,  
The hinder foot still firmer."—*Inf.* 1.—CARY.

How well is here described the climber! But this is one only of many similar passages, in some of which Virgil himself is shown acting to perfection the part of an Alpine guide, and all so graphic

<sup>1</sup> Dean Church—*Dante, an Essay*.





Everything, however, tends to show that Dante enjoyed being on and among the mountains, watching, as he did, from their slopes the purples of the plain, the dust-storms sweeping over it, or the more frequent rain-storm descending from "the cloud that touched the mountain" (*Purg.* 5). While it was from such heights especially that he gazed his fill upon the starry constellations that made his heaven, he expressly instances the mountains of Carrara as commanding a view of the stars as well as of the sea.

That great sight also, the sea, was always dear to him. He speaks of seeing—not from hill-top this time but from the sea-shore—how

"near upon the hour of dawn  
Through the thick vapours, Mars, with fiery beam,  
Glares down the West over the ocean floor."

And nowhere, not in the "innumerable laughter" of the sea-waves of Æschylus, nor in Keble's "many twinkling smile of ocean," have we a more delicate landscape touch than in Dante's—

"And seen from far, as onward came the day,  
I recognised the trembling of the sea."

We may observe here that the dawn seems to have had more charm for him than those evening shades which might have been supposed most in harmony with his melancholic spirit. Early mediæval art had apparently the same predilection.

It is impossible not to recognise in all this a sympathy with some of the noblest attributes of landscape beauty, such as Greek or Roman rarely showed, but which recalls the meditative delight of the Christian father in "the wandering cloud over the sea;" though it may be true, as Mr. Ruskin urges, that pure sky rather than cloud pleased best the eagle vision of Dante.

The forest did not attract southern natures as it did the northern, and Dante was filled with dread as he found himself "in a gloomy wood astray," though it rather follows that his imagination was powerfully affected by its gloom. But it is certain that he had a Chaucer-like delight in the "green wood" and among glades such as he found at Ravenna. He speaks of

"that celestial forest whose thick shade  
With lively greenness the new springing day  
Attempered"—

where "delicious odours breathed," and

"in the pleasant air  
That intermittent never, never veered,  
Smote on my temples, gently as the wind  
Of softest influence, at which the sprays  
Obedient all, leaned trembling."

Then he sees that his path

"Was bounded by a rill, which to the left  
With little rippling waters bent the grass  
That issued from its brink."—*Purg.* 28.—CARY.

No detail of the picturesque escapes him: a "wan shade" reminds him of

"that beneath black boughs and foliage green  
O'er the cool stream in alpine glens displayed."<sup>1</sup>

And in contrast there is this bright bit—

"as some cliff that from the bottom, eyes  
Its image mirrored in the crystal flood,  
As if to admire its brave appareling,  
Of verdure and of flowers."—*Parad.* 30.

Here is that feeling for the pictorial beauty of a careless corner which we missed in Homer. Then to take an instance of that which is perfectly homely—

"a larger aperture oft-times is stopped,  
With forked stake of thorn by villager,  
When the ripe grape imbrowns,"

or again the spectacle of the morning hoar-frost and of the village hind

"whom fails his wintry store,  
And looking out beholds the plain around  
All whitened; whence impatiently he smites  
His thighs, and to his hut returning in  
There paces to and fro, wailing his lot."—*Purg.* 4.—CARY.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, "above its own cool streams the Alp outspreads." "Alpe" is the term for pasturage; in the Alps, therefore, it refers to the middle slopes, in the Apennines to the tops. "Alpe" is used by Lorenzo di Medici and others for a high Tuscan mountain; "Alpestre" by Boccaccio for "rustic," "boorish;" "Alpe" is now in common use for the summits of the Tuscan Apennines. See the Ordnance Maps.—D. W. F.

Dante is held forth by Mr. Ruskin as most perfectly representing the mediæval ideas respecting landscape. He argues this through many eloquent pages—from his preference for the formal and definite in any landscape he constructs—from his dislike of forests—from his enjoyment of simple grass verdure, and generally of colour—from his narrow apprehension of mountains, caring for them, as he thinks, little more than as they afforded elevated terraces,—from his dislike of rocks, which meant to him only very bad walking,—and from his passion for pure unclouded light.

We think, as has been shown, that exception may be taken to this in respect both of the forests and the mountains, and while conceding that in other points, judging from the character of mediæval art, Dante was intensely mediæval, we would nevertheless claim for him, what we have already claimed for Homer, that privilege of all great poets—the power to break the bounds of his time and to see things invisible to his age. Thus there occur in him those wonderfully clear perceptions of picturesque detail, combined with a sense of the solemn grandeur of nature unlike anything else, classic or mediæval. Where, indeed, shall we find the like till we come to Wordsworth? In the very next name of note there is nothing of the sort.

Petrarch (1304-1374), like Dante, had personal experience of travel, but it did not leave with him similar impressions. The charms of Vacluse, the recesses of the Ardennes, the wooded seclusion of the Euganean hills amidst which he died, failed to store his mind with those vivid recollections which enabled Dante to be so picturesque a poet. He loved Vacluse, it is true, but it was as a place favourable to meditation, where the solitude could make itself felt in the silence, or perhaps still more in the quiet gurgle of the waters. Few could describe an actual scene and leave less idea of what it really was than he; and when he sets himself to tell how he climbed a mountain, as he did Mont Ventoux, certainly in those days a notable thing for which he must have the credit, he did so chiefly to record his feelings and reflections, and to relate how, on the summit, his "soul rose to lofty contemplations," and he opened the *Confessions* of St. Augustine, a small copy of which he always carried with him!

It was indeed as a votary not of nature but of Laura that he sought Vacluse. Her image haunted him everywhere, and he speaks of the hills as hiding from him the sight of "Madonna"

Laura's house. "Wherever a pine tree or a hill casts a shadow," he writes, "there I arrest my steps, and in the first rock I draw mentally a picture of her fair face." Of the Ardennes he says: "Arrived at inhospitable and savage woods where one runs great risk from armed men, even there I walk secure, for I have no other fear than of that sun whose rays burn with love." Certain objects and aspects of nature are indeed at his pen's end, but the stock is very meagre, and the iteration monotonous, though the conceits he attaches to them are endless. His otherwise touching sonnet upon "Vaucluse Revisited" after Laura's death has nothing more to say about it than this—

"O valley ! filled with sounds of my lament,  
O river ! swollen with these my tears so oft,  
O forest creatures, flitting birds, and soft  
Slim darting fish, betwixt the green banks pent !  
O breeze made warm with this my sighing breath,  
O sweet, sweet path to such a bitter end !  
O once fair hills ! that now stern foreheads bend :—  
Love brought, Love brings me here, Love strong as death.  
How each familiar form I recognise !  
I who can scarce discern myself in me,  
Changed from such gladsome life to infinite woe.  
Here once I saw her : here return to see  
Whence she passed pure, to heaven without disguise,  
And left her lovely empty sheath below." <sup>1</sup>

Such is the turn he always gives. Scenery is to him an unfailing repertory for subtle "double entendre" and little more, except, indeed, as that refuge where he might abandon himself to his reflections. "From morning till night," he tells a friend, "I climb barren mountains, traverse humid valleys, seek the deepest caves, or walk accompanied only by my own thoughts along the banks of my river." Truly it was always thoughts about himself that occupied him, and not thoughts about nature.

Boccaccio (1313-1375) is still more unsatisfactory,<sup>2</sup> but then he was distinctly a story-teller of his day, busy only with his story.

<sup>1</sup> Miss Blanche Leppington has kindly favoured me with the above translation, and with reference to the sonnet it is a curious fact that Cervantes makes his "Don" exclaim in exactly similar style: "This is the place where the tears from these eyes will increase the waters of that little brook ; and where my profound and uninterrupted sighs will incessantly move the leaves of these mountain oaks." Was Cervantes satirising Petrarch !

<sup>2</sup> His book, *De Montibus*, is only a dry section of a geographical treatise.

Yet we can hardly help comparing the opening of the *Decameron* with Dante's entrance upon his solemn dreamland through the gloomy wood :

"They travelled two short miles, and came to the place appointed. It was a little eminence remote from any great road, covered with trees and plants of an agreeable verdure, on the top of which was a stately palace with a grand and beautiful court in the middle. Around it were fair meadows, and most delightful gardens with fountains of the purest and best water. The vaults were stored with the richest wines."

Petrarch certainly knew something more than this of the charms of scenery : for one thing, he liked to be alone with them. In the powerful story of *Theodore and Honoria* Boccaccio lays his scene in the "dark forest of spreading pines surrounded by dense underwood and thickets of bramble," but it is clearly only the art of the scene-painter that brings the forest there, and of a commonplace painter too.

"A slumber of a hundred years," says Hallam, "fell upon Italy after the death of Petrarch ; the awakening took place in the fifteenth century, towards the end of which, Lorenzo di Medici, the Magnificent (1448-1492), as we know him for the palatial splendours of his rule, showed also a classic fondness for the farm and the vineyard." "He has given us," says an eloquent writer, "not merely a peasant's love-song ; he has given us the peasant himself, his house, his fields, and his sweetheart, as they exist even now."<sup>1</sup> Lorenzo, in fact, possessed what the Petrarchian literature seemed to have destroyed—an eye for nature in her freshness and freeness. Charminglly he calls us to note how

"On some sweet sunny slope the olive grows,  
Its hues still changing as the zephyr blows."

It is he who, lifting his eyes to the far horizon, tells us that

"Already the east was red,  
The mountain top like gold."

And he could see there the beauty of mountain snows, or he would not have resorted to such a simile as this—

"When on the lofty snow-clad mountain's height  
Apollo spreads his jewelled robe of light."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Euphorion*, i. 159.

<sup>2</sup> "Quando sopra i nevosi ed alti monti  
Apollo spande il suo bel lume adorno."

But Lorenzo is remarkable—exceptional—for portraying quite another aspect of nature—nature in the terribleness of an inundation. If in the *Ambra* he adopts an allegorical style, he yet goes minutely into the detail of the watery devastation, and, unlike any but a still greater contemporary of his, he was struck with the power and grandeur of the spectacle. Leonardo da Vinci at Milan, Lorenzo at Florence, looked with similar thoughts at mountain horizons and at mountain storms, as we shall have further opportunity of showing. And if Lorenzo thought the fearful swirling waters worth describing in poetry, Leonardo held forth the same as a fit subject for art, though in the few paintings he has left to us the wonderful descriptions in his manuscript, evidently notes for intended subjects, are not made use of. But Lorenzo, with his marvellously modern insight, was, like Leonardo, far in advance of his age. That flash of genius passed, and in the poets that followed the feeling for nature is more and more cold and conventional.

Ariosto, indeed (1474-1533), the most popular of them all, takes his readers into wild, woodland, and rocky scenes enough; amongst such places he was forced much against his will to spend a part of his own life,<sup>1</sup> but there is no sympathy in his descriptions, which pall with their wearisome sameness. The art of both Ariosto and his predecessor, Boiardo, has been well described as “pageant art”—“the people are pageant people who only play at being in forests and deserts;”<sup>2</sup> it is not surprising, therefore, that the forests and deserts are very unreal; they are stage properties, though of course dreadful to a degree,—places where no one would go that could help it, unless, like a rare hero, he were in search of the dreadful; and as none of the poets’ readers would ever wander there of his own accord, it was of no use to spend much description upon them. Let this serve as a specimen:—

“At length a wild and lonely vale I found,  
With hills and dreadful caves encompassed round;  
Here in the midst, a wondrous rock I viewed,  
On which a strong and stately castle stood.”

Again we may say that the constant mention of mountains, caves,

<sup>1</sup> As governor of the Lunigiana, or upper valley of the Serchio, shut in between the Carrara peaks and the central Apennines. See “Sketches from the Apennines,” by Douglas Freshfield, *Alpine Journal*, vii. 382.

<sup>2</sup> *Euphorion*, ii. 101.



castles, and forests, had some effect upon the imagination, and must have raised some echoes of the romantic in landscape. But for enjoyment Ariosto, like others, betakes himself to the usual garden-scenes.

How little there was of "Landscape in Literature" at this time we may judge from Bembo (1470-1547), who lays the scene of his famous *Asolani* at a spot of the choicest landscape beauty, where the gardens of the Queen of Cyprus sloped down the hill of Asolo. There the oak copses below, and the grassy downs above, afford delightful wandering, while the vast prospect of the Venetian plain spreads beneath the eye to the Euganean hills, gracing the dim distance. Morning lights up a thousand beauties in this wide scene, and evening sheds over it all her purple splendours; yet neither morning nor evening, neither plain nor copse, nor softly soaring hills, seem to have caught the eye of Bembo. His endless love-talks take place in shady alleys and under cool trellises, where he specially admires the laurels trimmed so deftly that not a leaf sticks out, the walks paved with flint, and the walls ornamented with coloured marbles! It is clear that with this fashionable writer landscape presented itself only in the shape of the garden and the grove. We shall presently see how differently a great artistic genius at the foot of the hill of Asolo was at the same time observing the same scenery.

And if it must be conceded that not far off at Venice there was a celebrated "literateur," Aretino, who, however foul his reputation, possessed a true feeling for nature, it was because he was the daily companion of one of the greatest of painters. Looking out from a window one evening, he saw what Bembo apparently never would have seen. This is Mr. Symond's version:

"I turned my eyes to heaven, which, from the moment when God made it, was never adorned with such painted loveliness of lights and shadows. The whole region of the air was what those who envy you (he writes to Titian), because they are unable to be you, would fain express. To begin with, the buildings of Venice, though of solid stone, seemed made of some ethereal substance. Then the sky was full of variety: here clear and ardent, there dulled and overclouded. What marvellous clouds there were! Masses of them in the centre of the scene hung above the house-roofs, while the immediate part was formed of a gray tint inclining



to dark. I gazed astonished at the varied colours they displayed. The nearer masses burned with flames of sunset; the more remote blushed with a blaze of crimson only less afire. O how splendidly did nature's pencil treat and dispose that airy landscape, keeping the sky apart from the palaces, just as Titian does! On one side the heavens showed a greenish blue, on another a blueish green, invented verily by the caprice of nature, who is mistress of the greatest masters. With her lights and her darks thus she was harmonising, toning and bringing into relief just as she wished. Seeing which, I who know that your pencil is the spirit of her inmost soul, cried aloud three or four times: 'O, Titian! where are you now?'"

This passage was clearly inspired by art and owed nothing to literature, which in works of imagination was in daily decline. "The Italians," says Hallam, "in this part of the sixteenth century are profuse in the song of birds, the murmur of waters, the shade of woods, and as these images are always delightful, they shed a charm over much of their poetry." Yet, as he justly observes, such beauties "belong to the decline of art, and generally presage a dull twilight or thick darkness of creative poetry."

Tasso (1544-1595) illustrates this remark. Armida's garden, though the poet is said to have taken Sorrento for his model, is a very artificial place.

"There glassy lakes reflect the beaming day;  
Here crystal streams in gurgling fountains play:  
Cool vales descend, and sunny hills arise,  
And groves and caves and grottoes, strike the eyes—  
*Art* showed her utmost power."

It is "art," let us observe, not nature, which has contrived this paradise, and from such a line as "some horrid rock on Alpine mountains bred," one would gather that wild nature was actually distasteful to the poet. That in *Aminta* he raised the pastoral drama into great repute is characteristic of his genius, and that the "pastoral" with all its conventionalities should be the chief form of poetic activity in the sixteenth century is a fact to be noted in view of the splendid development of romantic landscape-art in its earlier portion. For the decline of art which so speedily followed, Tasso was just the poet; and the Carracci school, as Mr. Hallam has pointed out, perfectly reflects his spirit.

Camoens (1524-1579) is indeed praised by Humboldt for his "inimitable descriptions of the never ceasing mutual relation between air and sea,—between the varying form of the clouds above, their meteorological changes, and the different states of the surface of the ocean." He is "a great sea painter." But with the *Lusiad* we are introduced to a new region altogether, a region of discovery and adventure, of tropic seas, continents, and islands. This region lay for long outside literature. Voyages and travels after a time became very popular, and doubtless had great influence in raising that taste for the wild and grand in natural scenes which belongs to modern life; but landscape has always derived too much of its charm from historical and poetic association, and from the familiar "picturesque," to be much affected by the strange and rare of unfamiliar climes. Scenes of travel cannot come under the head of "Landscape in Literature" till a very recent date.

When we come to the seventeenth century we enter a period of great barrenness in the imaginative literature of Continental Europe. What there is belongs chiefly to France, but it is dramatic, social, and has little care for nature. A genuine perception and enjoyment of scenery is found only in the literature of England, and is a subject that properly belongs to the history of English landscape-art; we will only touch upon so much of it as will illustrate the marked difference between English and Continental feeling in the periods we have been concerned with.

This difference shows itself early. We find it distinctly enough in Chaucer (1328-1400). Bearing in mind what the poet of Vaucuse had been writing of its shades and waters, let us listen to the strains of the poet of Woodstock, who had issued from his door

"about the springing of the gladsome day."

. . . . .

"And to a pleasant grove I 'gan to pass  
Long ere the brighté sun uprisen was;  
In which were oakes great, straight as a line  
Under the which the grass so fresh of hue  
Was newly sprung, and an eight foot or nine  
Evéry tree well from his fellow grew,  
With branches broad laden with leavés new,  
That sprungen out against the sunné sheen,  
Some very red, and some a *glad light green*."

Or again—

“I rose anon, and thought I wouldé gone  
Into the wood to hear the birdés sing ;  
When that the misty vapour was agone

And clear and fair ywas the morrowning ;  
The dew also like silver in shining  
Upon the leavés.

There saw I growing eke the fresh hawthorn  
In white motley, that so soté doth ysmell  
Ash, fir, and oak, with many a young acorn  
And many a tree more than I can tell,  
And me before me saw a little well,<sup>1</sup>  
That had his course, as I could well behold,  
Under a hill, with quické streams and cold,  
The gravel gold, the water pure as glass,  
The bankés round the well environing,  
And soft as velvet was the youngé grass ;  
That thereupon lustily came springing,  
The suite of trees abouten compassing  
Their shadow cast.”

Lastly this—

“Now have I then eke this condition  
That above all the flow’rés in the mead  
Then love I most these flow’rés white and red,  
Such that men callen daisies in our town.”

Now we must acknowledge to a formal quaintness in the grove of young trees some eight or nine feet apart ; still, this grove is a very different thing from the valley that Petrarch “filled with his lamentings” ;<sup>1</sup> and when we read further of the simple wild flower, white and red, that takes his heart, of the white motley of the hawthorn, and the young grass, we find that nature in springtide—the inspiration of the troubadour a century earlier—was also the inspiration of the English poet, while cultured Italy, corrupted by the Renaissance, was fast losing it.

Still more characteristic of the spirit of Chaucer is that epithet of “glad” applied to the vivid fresh springing leaves through which the sunshine glows. This not only indicates that minute observation essential to a true enjoyment of nature which the Italians, in their self-consciousness and deep in mythologic lore, had lost sight

<sup>1</sup> A spring or source.

of,—it not only illustrates the joyousness of Chaucer's temperament,—but it is an instance of that ascription of emotion to a natural object which, though conspicuous in the poetry of the Hebrew, had rarely found expression in the thought of the West. "Fallacy," it may be called, but it is a fallacy which a heart in sympathy with the natural world will always indulge in, and which enshrines the fundamental truth that nature is one great symbolic language. That indeed might well be called a fallacy which was expressed by Lorenzo di Medici, already quoted for his genuine appreciation of landscape beauty, when he makes the violets declare

"No summer gales or art-conducted showers  
Have nursed our slender forms, but lover's sighs  
Have been our gales, and lover's tears our dew."

From this characteristic conceit of the time, which made the little violet people derive their purple sadness from the lovers that have been maundering amongst them, Chaucer as characteristically differs when he regards the blithe populace of daisies as full of their own joy, the young leaves as "glad," and when he goes out to behold and to share in the gladness of leaf and flower, to him

"To see this flow'r against the sunné spread  
When it upriseth early by the morrow,  
That blissful sight *softeneth all my sorrow.*"

Chaucer in truth struck the keynote of English feeling for landscape, love for simple nature, homely detail, and recognition of a true source of emotion in nature's self, and the continued wholesomeness of it is well shown when Raleigh sings—

"May pure contents  
For ever pitch their tents  
Upon these downs, these meads, these rocks, these mountains,  
And peace still slumber by these purling fountains,  
Which we may every year  
Find when we come a-fishing here."

Sir Philip Sidney is more sentimental, and his *Arcadia* is full of the worn-out affectations of the pastoral. Still in his sonnets we have here and there the true ring. In the well-known one beginning—

"With how sad steps, O Moon! thou climb'st the skies;  
How silently! and with how sad a face!"

the pathos of nature comes into view, for the poet does not suppose

the moon to be sad because of him, but on account of her own sad condition—

“Thou feel'st a lover's case,  
I read it in thy looks, thy languished grace.”

But it is in Spenser, the admirer and imitator of Tasso, that we may trace by comparison all the more distinctly the strain of English feeling. He enjoys the forest with the joyousness of Robin Hood. He breathes freely in “the wasteful woods and forest wide;” he excellently pictures

“an aged oak on the green,  
A goodly oak sometime had it been”;

and now

“the gray moss marred his rine,  
His bared boughs were beaten with storms.”

Tasso's Erminia, when she takes refuge in the woodland, sees nothing of its picturesqueness: she only admires the shade, and finds the smooth beech bark delightfully convenient for inscribing the name of Tancred. Spenser, when his lovers seek “a grateful shade,” is careful to paint

“two goodly trees that faire did spread  
Their arms abroad, with gray mosse over-cast,  
And their green leaves trembling with every blast.”

It is Spenser, too, who, when he betakes himself to the pastoral, turns it into a shepherd's calendar, following the months, and concerned with the loves of real rustics. Spenser has been called the painter's poet, and might well claim fuller notice, but we are here only indicating the divergence of English thought from Continental.

Who does not know that when Shakespeare leaves the world of human life and passion, and looks aside upon the scenes of nature, his “native wood-notes wild” show perfect perception, as well of the smallest detail of landscape beauty as of the grandeur of its wide expanses? He ranges at will from the

“daffodils  
That come before the swallow dares, and take  
The winds of March with beauty,”

to the

“murmuring surge  
That on unnumbered idle pebbles chafes,”

and to the “glorious mornings” that “flatter the mountain tops.”

The very soul of England breathes in Shakespeare. As we glance forward we find Ben Jonson expressly admiring Penshurst as an "ancient pile" amidst its lordly woods; Denham founding a poem upon a view from a hill which includes a distant ruin; Cowley, whose delight was that characteristic one for an Englishman, "a small house and a large garden," declaring that his

"timeous Muse  
Unambitious tracks pursues,  
Does with weak unballast wings,  
About the mossy brooks and springs,  
About the trees, and blossomed heads,  
About the gardens' painted beds,  
About the fields and flowery meads,  
And all inferior beauteous things,  
Like the laborious bee  
For little drops of honey flee,  
And there with humble sweets contents his industrie."

It is Cowley, too, who writes: "We are here among the vast and noble scenes of Nature. . . . We walk here in the light and open ways of Divine Beauty."

Lastly there is Milton, learned in all the learning of the Italians, but whose English nurture preserves in him the pure love of landscape as well in its "vast and noble scenes" girt by

"Mountains on whose barren breast  
The labouring clouds do often rest,"

as in those of

"Meadows trim with daisies pied,"

and where,

"Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes  
From betwixt two aged oaks."

The passages quoted belong to the first wide sweep of view in which no element of landscape beauty is omitted, and is it not to Milton that we owe the modern use of the word "rural"? He speaks as one who

"Forth issuing on a summer morn to breathe  
Among the pleasant villages and farms  
Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight,  
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,  
Or daisy,—each rural sight, each rural sound."

This digression—as we must confess it to be, for the landscape of English literature of these periods lies outside the corresponding

history of landscape-art—may be excused for the remarkable contrast it affords to those contemporary literatures in which the true love of landscape seems only to have dwindled and died.<sup>1</sup>

Let us briefly gather up the results of our survey of landscape in literature.

Putting aside the ages of myth and mystery, we find, in the early literature of Greece, nature closely observed and freely resorted to for its store of simile; nature, yet only certain objects in nature, and seldom more than as illustrating human action; while, again, nature to be enjoyed must be nature tamed and utilised, made useful and made agreeable. Excepting an occasional perception of the romantic in the greater poets, it is habitable landscape which is dealt with, developing later into that freer form of it which is called the pastoral.

This narrow appreciation of scenery widens and deepens somewhat as Roman literature succeeds to Greek, as culture and safety spread, as the city and the court begin to weary, and as the villa may be planted in all security to command the outlook upon lake and shore, forest and plain.

Then a new stream of thought comes in,—the nobler conception of landscape first breathed into the world by the monotheistic Hebrew who looked at nature in its relation not to man but to God, and rejoiced in it as but “the hiding of His power.” Yet when this reaches the Western world it is tempered and touched with a pathos new to cultured thought, as Christianity rises with its troubled day. But again “the old order changeth.” After a darkness as of night and winter, bird-notes are heard in the air, and the beauty of spring seems a new revelation to awakened man. The poet sings perpetually of the “pleasaunce” and the flowery mead,

<sup>1</sup> It is true there was a considerable lapse even in England at the latter end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century, of which Dryden and Pope furnish sufficient instances; but there were speedy signs of revival when Gay (1688-1732) wrote the *Shepherd's Week*, and the popularity of Thomson's *Seasons*, despite the “solemnly ridiculous” into which the poet sometimes falls, shows the persistence of the English tradition. It is in Gray, however, especially in his letters, that we find the first full expression of that enjoyment of romantic landscape of which Scott eventually took such mighty advantage. Henceforth it was along the two lines of romantic and of rural beauty in landscape, the one inaugurated by Gray, the other revived and sustained by Cowper, that English literature moved with ever-growing power. Now, too, on the Continent the long dried-up stream began to show the stirring of its waters. In France Rousseau was cotemporary with Gray, and the Goethe-Schiller period quickly followed in Germany.



and presently, in company with the romance-writer, wanders into the green-wood and is thrilled with its mystery ; while Dante will even climb the mountain brow, and discern something of Alpine grandeur. But in this Dante is alone, and after him the poetical observation of nature sinks, with slight exceptions, into inanity, and a wearisome use of certain stock effects and objects, all on behalf of the love-sick. So arrives and ends, except in England, the seventeenth century.

But now, what have been the relations of landscape-art so far to the literature we have been tracing ? Here the remarkable fact appears that while literature has given subject to art, the course of art development has been singularly independent. The landscape of Greek literature, so far as we know, had little or no answering representation in art, unless we except that which Sophocles is said to have introduced upon the stage ; we may be quite sure the Hebrew had none. In Roman wall-painting there was, as we shall have occasion to show, a good deal, and equalling in picturesqueness and freedom the standard of the Roman poets. When the new, more sentimental feeling for landscape arose, Roman art was dying, while the Byzantine succeeding to it was worthless. What there was in the way of attempt or indication through those ages of decay will be dealt with in its place. It was not till in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries Troubadour and Minnesinger had sung much of groves and green fields, that we find in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries miniature illuminations dealing with a landscape similarly gay and green. Here literature gave the form to art, but it was without the help of literature that art developed into the admirable landscape of Van Eyck, Dürer, Altdorfer, and others, through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Art here quite made up for having lagged so long behind.

South of the Alps the style of the illuminators long prevailed. Dante doubtless gave much of form and character to early Italian landscape, but could not inspire it with his own genius. Later, Boccaccio set the fashion as to subject, but art got no glimpses of nature through him nor even through Petrarch. It was Massaccio who, early in the fifteenth century, without help from contemporary poetry, first caught that glimpse, and who, while Dante had spoken of "the hills by cause of which the Pisan cannot see Lucca," first drew those hills, not as on a map, but in their simple and solemn simplicity of bulk and shadow against the sky. Da Vinci and others of the Florentine school followed, and thereafter till the



middle of the sixteenth century, while literature fell into vapid commonplaces about the garden and the grove, landscape-art, especially in Venice, rose into commanding power. Giorgione and Titian display a freedom and grandeur of which the literature of the time knows nothing.

From that period landscape became a distinct field for the expression of art feeling. It frequently, indeed, takes its form from the poets, Tasso in particular, and it shares in the decadence of art power; but in the seventeenth century, and during a time of utter literary feebleness, we have the loveliness of Claude, the sentiment of Gaspar Poussin, the romance of Salvator Rosa. Later we have, still with no help from literature, but rather against its current, a Dutch school of unexampled richness and variety.

This last is an extraordinary phenomenon. The French literature of that time has nothing to answer to it—nothing which could have given it inspiration. Germany was in literature then only French. We cannot suppose that England had much influence. Holland had indeed shown great intellectual activity, but it was in the direction of theology, speculation, and politics. The fact that the earlier half of the century was distinguished by the appearance of several Dutch poets is interesting, but we may doubt whether this had much to do with the landscape of the latter half. Even in England we may suspect that landscape-art had a more direct connection with the Dutch school than with native literature. But the disconnection between art and literature may perhaps be most strikingly seen in this, that while the rise of the Romantic school in literature is almost within living memory, in painting it may be traced back as early as the sixteenth century, reaching fulness of expression in Salvator and Ruysdael in the seventeenth.

The question then arises, Has not literature in respect of its appreciation of landscape owed more to art than art to literature? There has been reciprocity at least, and, coming to the great expression of delight in natural scenery which we find contemporaneously in Gray and in Rousseau, may not much of it have been due to the abundant landscape-art then in existence? We cannot solve the question here, but when we come to trace the course of landscape-art in detail, it will be well to bear in mind that we are concerned with a perception of natural beauty and grandeur to a great extent peculiar to art.

## CHAPTER IV.

### PRINCIPLES OF ART APPLIED TO LANDSCAPE.

**FORM** :—Character of line—Nature of the beautiful—Composition of lines—Proportion of parts—Perspective—Organic unity—Fitness—Record of time—Dignity—Generalisation—Composition. **SHADOW** :—Relief—Effect—Concentration—Mystery—Pathos. **COLOUR** :—Harmonies—Contrasts—Influence of atmosphere—Gradation—Effects of shadow, of reflection, of transparency—Colour a help to composition—Expresses sentiment—Appeals to imagination. **GENERAL CONCLUSIONS** :—Inherent powers of art—The real and the ideal—Noble art—Pathos of nature—Its gradual apprehension in art—Conventionalism—Personality of painters.

“PAINTING, or art generally, as such, . . . is nothing but a noble and expressive language.”<sup>1</sup> If we are to begin at the beginning we must recur to this fundamental truth, that pictorial art is a language, a speech, its subject being the beauty and expressiveness of the outward world—that mightier speech which it interprets. It is a poetical language, for it is an utterance of the imagination, addressed to the imagination and intended to rouse emotion. But, unlike the poetry of sound or of word, it is addressed not to the ear but to the eye, and its means are representations of visible objects. Yet these representations are imitative only to a certain extent, limited as they are by the means at the disposal of art and the purpose of the artist. He has a certain thing to tell, to do which he must leave some other things untold; what he does is to suggest rather than to copy; his means allow no more, his purpose requires no more.

Three attributes of visible things are available for art—form, shadow, and colour; but of these the first only is essential, for while art may do without shadow or colour, it cannot do without form, or there would be no representation at all. Form stands first, then; and, for us, form as found in landscape, but any considera-

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Painters*, vol. i. ch. ii.

tion of it must include—*Character of line, Proportion of parts, and Organic Unity.*

*Character of line.*—The phrase implies at once that the resources of art are of the nature of signs, and imitative only in a sense. It is the impulse of the child, and sometimes of the greatest master, to express his thought by a line—an “outline” we call it. But there is no outline in nature; objects reach their limit—that is all; by that limit, that ceasing to be, they are defined to us, and the simplest and most effective way of representing that limit in art is by a line, thick or thin, upon a flat surface. Wonders may be done by such means, but here comes in “character of line.” The child’s scrawl is characterless, the master’s is full of character. It is so chiefly because it deals with the essence of the thing—its leading idea; but also there will be a singular charm due to his instinctive and trained observation of the quality of the lines defining form; upon this quality, resolving itself into a subtle combination of the straight and the curved, depends the beauty and interest of all lines.

Why this should be?—why one line should be more beautiful or more interesting than another?—is not one question but two, since a line may be interesting for other reasons than its beauty. To answer the first is to encounter a curious and much discussed problem—the nature of the beautiful in external objects. We cannot pretend to settle that here, but we may indicate the direction in which, as we think, a solution may be found. Is not all form symbolic? Is there not indeed a symbolism attaching to all visible things, resulting from a certain intimate correspondence between mind and matter, the one everlastingly answering to and the exponent of the other? If so, what does the form which we call beautiful symbolise? We can perhaps give no better answer than that the beautiful in the external world symbolises *perfection*. It is the language in which nature utters that thought. It is because external beauty suggests perfection, that we apply the word not only to beautiful objects, but equally to that which is intellectually and morally perfect, and speak of a beautiful truth, a beautiful action. Nay, further, are not beauty, truth, and goodness in their innermost nature aspects of one and the same perfection?

This beauty of objects, like the beauty of truth and of goodness, moves the admiration of the intellect, since to this perfection there

must contribute several admirable qualities, such as unity, just relation, fitness, etc.; but it also moves, like the beauty of truth and of goodness, the admiration of the heart, or, in other words, love, and this because that which is the sign of perfection among visible things must be the sign also of that ultimate and highest perfection known to us, which is goodness, the ultimate and perfect harmony of all emotions and actions. In this way we would reconcile the long dispute whether beauty be a concept of the reason or a sentiment of the heart; it is necessarily both; but its deepest base is found in that moral nature from which all emotions spring—our admirations or repulsions, our likes or dislikes, among material things. It is because of this deep relation that we call a beautiful thing “lovely,” and it is because of this also that the beautiful must needs be the noblest subject for human art.

But to return to beauty of line, which we have said depends upon a combination of the two elements, straightness and curve. The question arises why a circle which is perfect truth, or a straight line which is perfect truth, should not be the most beautiful, because the most perfect, of all forms in art? We may reply, that while in the perfection there is certainly beauty, it is in both cases a beauty too soon exhausted; it is comprehended at a glance—there is nothing to awaken interest. The highest truths and the noblest emotions are not thus simple; they are mysteriously composite; they come to us with infinite and inextricable relations; and in like manner the highest beauty of form resides in that which is composite, so that in each single line where the qualities of the curved line and the straight are combined in subtle alternation, a beauty is generated far beyond that of either by itself. We get then a beauty that is interesting—the beauty of combined perfections, the beauty which receives the expressive designation of “grace,”—that is to say, a beauty which wins especial favour, and is not without pathetic suggestion, due perhaps to the tenderness awakened by the sight of that which seems yielding or fragile. Or again, it may be a beauty in which a moral satisfaction is concerned, since there is in it a perfection of strength, avoiding alike the weaknesses of meagreness and of redundancy.

Nature is full of lines, perfect in their delicate combination of qualities, and very rarely offers a straight or a curved line of mathematical exactness. Man-made things may be straight, for it is man’s shortest and most convenient way to make them so; but things

that under nature's guidance grow, or happen, or exist under a combination of forces, are not straight; too much has gone to the making of them. One apparently straight line in nature may indeed suggest itself, the level line of a great sea-horizon; but the immensity of this provides an element of mystery which is itself sufficient. And for perfect circles there are the sun and moon, and the semicircle of the "bow in the cloud," but these are quite exceptional. Nature delights in the balance of the two opposites, giving in her choicest work, the human figure, the choicest examples of a grace which it is the glory of Greek art to have rendered.<sup>1</sup>

But these lines of loveliness are found in abundance in inanimate nature; plants in stalk and leaf and flower, trees in stem and branch, offer delightful instances; the sweep of shores, the flow of waves, the slope of hills, the lines aloft of crag and mountain and cloud are instinct with the same speaking grace. And so are the timeworn lines of human handiwork, for the timeworn is nature's doing; and the cottage yielding to its years, or the wavy lines of an ancient street, carry all this charm of varied curve. Landscape-art must needs observe this exquisite quality of form, and for an example of the noblest sort we may point to the character of the mountain lines in Fig. 1, the work of one in whom grace of line was pre-eminent.

Beauty, however, is not the only element of interest in form. The symbolism of nature is not confined to the portrayal of perfection: it runs parallel with the whole range of human sensibility, and pictures what is hateful as well as what is lovely, what is fearful as well as what is delightful. It is the province of the imagination to recognise this, and to utter it with due regard to the main purpose of such utterance, either in the poetry of language, of sound, or of pictorial art. It is in power of expression that the chief interest of a complex line consists. We have already noticed grace and strength, but lines in their variety of suggestion seem almost instinct with moral life, and become something of an universal language. Every curve, every straightness carries its nice shade of meaning, and may indicate that which is other than graceful or strong, other than true or right. This meaning is emphasised where one sort of line passes into another, as, if a long inexpressive smoothness of curve is more or less suddenly arrested, the line takes vigour

<sup>1</sup> The horse, it may be added, possesses the like, and hence the harmonious beauty of an equestrian statue, if it has beauty.



FIG. 1.—TURNER'S ALPS FROM TURIN.

and character. This property in lines becomes of the greatest value when lines are applied to the delineation of form, as we shall presently see, and the master in art delights to avail himself of it as his pencil traces the contour of bough or cliff, or mountain crest.

Then there is *opposition of lines*. If two straight lines meet each other so as to form a right angle, there is nothing to interest the eye; but if they meet so as to produce an angle acute or obtuse, there is immediately some sense of that pleasure in which complexity has

its part, as is still more evident when a rectangular network which is more disagreeable than otherwise, is compared with that which gives a lozenge-shaped interval; while, if, as in Gothic tracery or the forms of leaves, the meeting or crossing lines are curved lines, a high sense of pleasure is obtained. No better example, perhaps, can be given to illustrate this than the petals and leaves of the cyclamen (Fig. 2), possessing as they do extreme grace of curve. One, more appropriate

FIG. 2.

to landscape, however, may be found in the interlacing stems of trees; Fig. 4 will illustrate this source of interest. Or for an instructive instance of line-combination, let us look again at the arrangement of mountain outlines. Here further elements of interest come in; the mere opposition of a short line to a long one at a certain angle of support gives satisfaction to the eye by the sense of balance and counterpoise (Fig. 3).



FIG. 3.—MOUNTAIN OUTLINES—VAN EYCK.

But when the lines are not straight, but themselves full of the mystery and beauty of which we have spoken, there is a delineation of form, the interest of which is inexhaustible. Turning again to the example already given from Turner (Fig. 1), we may point to the graceful combinations it displays in the wave-like tossing, intermingling, and balance of the mountain outlines. Or we may go back to so early an observer as Van Eyck for an appreciation of this beauty of mountain form, as in Fig. 3, from the *Holy*



FIG. 4.—TURNER'S TREES AT BOLTON.

*Warriors.* Again, there is the charm of soaring lines that support each other as they rise and fall (Fig. 10), while amongst downs or moorlands the soft interlacing lines have a beauty of their own, as in Fig. 5 from Turner; and there is the contrast afforded by the dead flat lines of a lake or sea, cutting sharp against a precipitous shore, an effect that Perugino, Dürer, Titian, and Turner alike delight in.

Here, however, we come across other elements of beauty in form, and we are led next to consider—

*Proportion of parts.*—Proportion implies difference controlled



by *unity*. It cannot be denied that equality of parts does not please the eye, still less does total inequality, while a certain relation or subordination between different members distinctly produces pleasure. Even in the opposition or combination of lines proportion comes in. Two lines of equal length crossing each other equally, exhibit no proportion, for there is no diversity. Take as an illus-



FIG. 5.—HILLS ABOVE FLORENCE.

tration the simple form of a cross (Fig. 6), which may be varied as to the length of the transverse bar, and as to its position on the upright limb. Proportion begins where the variation from exact

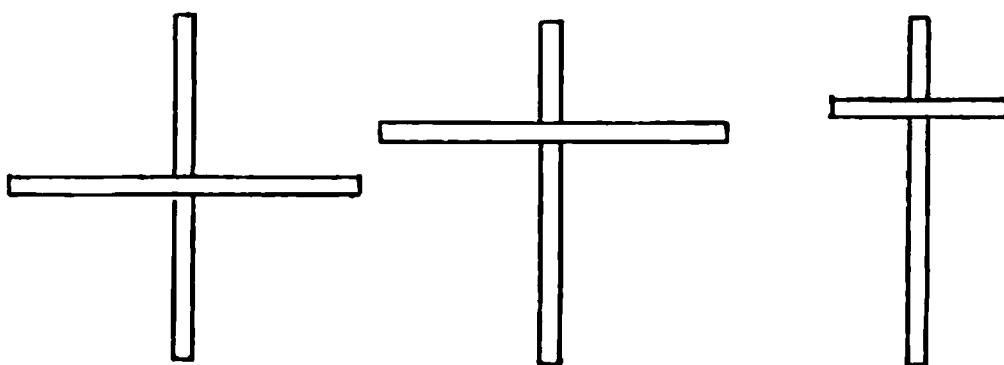


FIG. 6.

equality begins, where there is an adjustment of the lesser to the greater.

But there is a proportion of spaces, or of objects, as well as of lines, of which we may find an illustration in the group of cyclamen leaves (Fig. 7). Here, while there is diversity, it is controlled by unity, and the sense of proportion is satisfied; notwithstanding the complexity there is a distinct master-leaf to which the other leaves are clearly subordinate, yet not so subordinate as to fail of effectual relation. Nature is always regardful of proportion as an element of beauty, and trees and mountains will often show this beauty in

perfection; yet, as already said, nature is not always beautiful, and instances of ill proportion are not rare, otherwise we should not call some plants, some trees, some hills, some animals, ugly. This ugliness it can never be the mission of true art to reproduce. Nature herself warns us from the mistake.

We have hitherto been speaking of simple and absolute form, but there is an important modification of form as we see it in nature unsuspected by the untrained eye, and which, while it controls all art, offers to it great advantages. This is *Perspective*, or the variation in the shapes and sizes of objects dependent upon the point of sight. Standing immediately in front of a building, and equidistant from its two extremities, the horizontal lines of roof, window, and basement are all parallel; but moving to one end, and looking sideways at the same front, these lines will all converge towards an invisible point in the distance, and an element of variety is introduced much to its advantage. Or, recurring to the familiar form of the cross, instead of a front view put it in perspective, and the variety of angle that results at once adds pleasure to the eye. If a plain like that of Lombardy be cut up into square or oblong plots of cultivation, that uninteresting squareness disappears, as from some hillside—Alp or Apennine—one looks along the plain, then there come instead all sorts of angles and a continually narrowing width of spaces as distance increases (Figs. 8 and 9). Trees in a row present a wearying regularity, but looked at end-on, they arrange themselves in diminishing and varied masses. Mountains follow the same rule; a line of cones will by virtue of perspective become a picturesque group, and an ugly mountain form may be moulded into grace, though it must also be admitted that perspective may sometimes spoil a graceful form.



FIG. 7.

We have instanced the advantage derived from perspective in the view of a single house; that advantage is multiplied as we look along a street with its buildings diminishing and approaching on

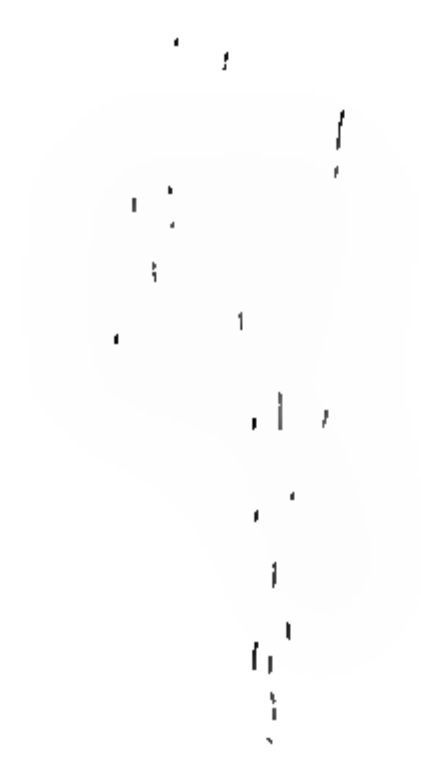


FIG. 8.—VIEW FROM ASOLO OVER THE TREVISANA.

either side. From perspective too it comes to pass, that a road, which in reality consists only of parallel lines of rut or grassy margin, becomes a seductive, winding, narrowing track, where the lines mingle at last in dim and curious complexity. And who does not appreciate (it is certain the landscape painter does) the wandering footpath, which, as perspective deals with it, twists and zigzags over hill and meadow, till it dives into a wood or disappears over a hill-top? The finest instance of the kind, however, may be found in the windings of a noble river such as Turner has recorded in his Rouen (Fig. 9).

Perspective, then, has much to do both with character of line and with proportion, and in this way is always working curious and unexpected results in landscape—always breaking in upon the regularity that would weary the eye—always introducing some fresh and often beautiful combination.

But it is much more than this, for without it no solid object can be represented in pictorial art at all, still less the series of objects of which a landscape is composed. It is only under the laws of perspective that things are visible to us, and art deals with them only as they are seen. The features of a landscape may indeed be rendered in a map, but a map deals with invisible conditions. It is a sign of certain facts, not a picture of them. So it is that the existence and the progress of landscape-art have strictly depended upon an apprehension more or less of perspective. The earlier attempts at a scene are all of the map sort. Landscape only comes as the painter learns to arrange all objects in the view as they really appear to the eye,—that is to say, in perspective. Then its magic power will enable him with two or three strokes to put leagues of distance upon an inch or so of paper.

We now approach the third and most important point in the observation of form, and that is *Organic unity*—the construction of a whole out of the lines and proportions we have been considering. It is this which discloses a purpose, tells a story, forms the ultimate intention of the artist, and, beyond all things, tests his power. Character of line, proportion, perspective, must all contribute to this final end.

One of the most obvious illustrations of the value and beauty of organic unity is afforded by plant or tree life, where the entire structure is ruled by radiation from a centre. Mr. Ruskin has dwelt much upon this, and under the title of the "Law of Radiation" has



FIG. 9.—TURNER'S ROVEN.

11 <

shown by ingenious diagrams how tree, flower, and leaf all conform to it. Let us be content with the tree, and notice how the strong stem, first gathering itself up from the spreading roots, and compacted into one soaring column, presently shoots forth boughs, these branches, and these again delicate sprays. All the visible lines of the tree diverge from the one stem, and, varied by accidents of growth, spread to a symmetrical circumference. The unity here is that of radiation.

But there are more complex sorts of unity of which radiation is still the source. Watch an incoming tide upon the shore of a bay, and you will discover a congeries of graceful curves, all placed in a certain connection, and indicating radiation from a centre. Or in the waves themselves you will have curves rising one upon another, connected by shorter curves, and all bound together in the unity of a rolling, tumbling, bounding mass of water. Or again, lift your eyes to a mountain form rearing itself upon the horizon, and full of that reposeful power which impresses the imagination so strongly; the two lines of contour are meaningless taken apart, but rising to an apex they compose a majestic whole; while interior lines, should they be visible, will all have relation to that single summit-point and radiate from it (Fig. 10).



FIG. 10.—BELLINI'S MOUNTAINS.

These are among the simplest instances of organic unity, and it is obvious that lines and proportions thus brought into expressive relation are endowed with a new and higher beauty—a new thought is attached to them, a higher kind of truth. For it is now that the relation of *fitness* comes into view; the pleasure derived from which is a further testimony to the moral basis of all form, for fitness is truth of adaptation.

Thus it is “fitness” which decides where that change of character shall take place which we have noticed in the composition of

a line. Shall not, for instance, the firmer, straighter lines, indicative of strength, belong to the stem of a tree, while the boughs yield more and more to the curve? Here fitness largely increases the scope and range of the beautiful, and causes that which, abstractly considered, may not be so good a line as another, to become admirable when seen in connection with an ultimate intention. The jagged and abrupt twists in the lines of an oak-branch may not be so beautiful in themselves as those of a birch or an ash, but as parts of a living whole, whose character is eminently expressive of sturdy vigour, and as mechanically fitted to that end, they have a fresh and independent value, and are actually grateful to the eye.

We may apply this to the lines of mountain form; there is a pleasure derived from fitness as they answer to the nature of the rock of which the mountain is composed, or to the manner in which it has been built up—or is being now worn down—as well as to the character of the soil or vegetation which clothes it. It has been pointed out by Mr. Ruskin that mountain *débris* falls in a beautiful curve similar to that of a bird's wing. That line is beautiful in itself, but there is fitness also, as it is expressive of slow natural forces. So there are others the interest of which is derived from their indication of volcanic shattering force or of rigid opposition to assault. There are forms of rock sometimes which almost look malignant, but which, as part of that vast symbolism of nature which runs parallel, as we have said, with the whole range of human emotion, and fitted to the place and function they occupy, become interesting if not delightful, especially so to the instructed eye of him—the artist—who, sympathetically observing nature, has something to tell, an emotion to raise, as well as a thing of beauty to produce.

It is fitness also which, apart from certain occult relations, rules proportion. Let us refer to the mountains of Bellini (Fig. 10). Two pyramidally-shaped mountains are seen there of different bulk, but each displaying a fitness of proportion which contrasts strikingly with some of the vagaries of later masters of the same school, as, for instance, with Patenier, who will raise amidst his landscape the most fantastic peaks in defiance of all sense of fitness. It may be difficult in every case to demonstrate the fitness, but we may always look for it in good proportion. The simple instance of a wayside cross illustrates it, for there is a fitness of adjustment according as top-heaviness, or weakness, or inconvenient lateral extension, is avoided.

It is, then, as both lines and proportion answer an end—show *fitness* for a purpose, and express that purpose—that they cause the highest pleasure, and in this adaptation there is clearly a new and higher sphere of observation for the artist. He must seize the special character of an object, or its most impressive phase, and his power to do this will be the measure of his artistic faculty. He must have, we may say, a sympathy with the living purpose of the thing—what it is doing, what the end it subserves. For we may speak of a living purpose in this sense, however inanimate the object; we find it in the aspiring, outstretching aspect of the tree, seeking light and air; in the onward rush or broken rebound of the wave, or even in the passive energy of rock, for the mountain peak, lifting itself on high amidst the rack of clouds, seems asserting its power, while the hurrying clouds are full of purpose in their speed.

But in all this the eye must be helped by knowledge. There must be an understanding of real form for one thing, and of the way in which perspective affects it for another, or all will go wrong. And there must also be a sufficient understanding of the composition or texture of an object—what sort of substance it is, whether vapoury, filmy, and diffusive, as a cloud; cohesive, transparent, flowing, as water; fibrous and elastic, as wood; fragile and polished, as leaves; solid, unyielding, and weighty, as rocks or soil. These facts, from distance or other causes, may not be immediately obvious to the eye, but the knowledge of them guides the hand to many subtleties of expression it would otherwise miss; especially in that peculiar excellence called “touch” or “handling,” which, though it may be paraded to the neglect of higher things, is never absent where there is complete artistic power. Some part of the pleasure derived from it comes no doubt from the mere opposition or interweaving of pencil, pen, or brush marks, taken as so many lines or shapes; but its true function is the expression of form and of quality of surface, and this is no mean function.

And further, to depict a natural object rightly, art often has to tell something of its history, or to show at least that it has a history, by giving what Mr. Ruskin well calls the “awful lines”—the record of Time, revealing the changeful fortunes of the past and perhaps the fate of the future. A feeling for the pensive charm of mutability is an eminent artistic gift. It points out how the tree has suffered from the storms of years, and how it “groweth old”; how the cliff



wears in the scooping waters; how the mountain crumbles and is scarred and riven. The story of the past belongs to the true delineation of most forms in nature, but not of all, for there are those which speak only of a joyous present and of a bright promise, as flowers, grasses, and young trees. This phase of nature enters also into the mind of the artist, as it did remarkably in those early mediæval days when trees in the springtide of their vigour, set amidst the bright beauty of the green earth, delighted singer and painter alike.

We have given the conditions for depicting a natural object rightly; we have yet to notice that selection of object and manner of treatment in which art finds its highest utterance. Not to anticipate too much what we shall have to say at the conclusion of our survey, we may point out here that while to select objects whose lines are of interesting quality—objects that are expressive of living purpose, or full of the record of time—is to go far in this direction, there is beyond these a dignity of suggestion which the noblest art ever seeks in what it portrays. Magnitude gives this dignity, and it is needless to say how the grandeur of mountains has taxed the powers of the highest landscape-art, and given a theme to the greatest of art critics. Extent bestows it, as in the sea. There is a peculiar dignity as well as beauty in soaring forms—a dignity not confined to the towering height of mountains, but strikingly expressed in the stems of lofty trees, as both Titian and Turner loved to show. Nor are lesser things without this attribute in the pure and simple character of their forms. Art has range enough among natural objects; but fine art, in its appeal to the imagination, selects and dwells upon those of finest quality.

Nor in noble art is "treatment" of less importance than selection. Its most distinctive trait is simplicity—a large simplicity essential to organic unity, and without which no work of art is great. We have already said that art must seize the special character of an object, or its most impressive aspect. This aim, properly kept in view, will bring simplicity, but may also issue in that crowd of impressions painfully prevalent in the landscape-art of inferior men. There must be concentration of expression; the isolation of the worthiest object; an emphasis of delineation at certain points while other points are minimised or omitted; subordination there must be of everything to the chief centre of interest. The necessities of expression demand this, as also the dignity, which belongs to

all great things. Nor is it so untrue to fact as it seems, for the eye sees only that upon which its attention is fixed; other matters disappear in a faint penumbra.

This is the meaning of "generalisation," which, though in feeble or careless hands a reproach to art, is, and ever must be, the test of the highest genius. It is properly a method of conveying one general or leading impression, undisturbed by too many particulars. Generalisation avoids or simplifies certain complexities of form, because, if these be laboriously detailed, they would encumber that which is its most excellent feature. Generalisation, no doubt, omits facts, but it omits them only that it may more vividly present the fact of greatest importance.

As we follow the course of landscape-art we shall see the gradual recognition of this necessity. The minute literalists of the early schools could only render a tree by attempting the impossible representation of every leaf, which glittered with metallic sharpness. Their rocks, as may be seen in Mantegna, show rigidly every crack and fracture; their soil is stuck full of individual pebbles. But these conscientious literalists, whose work in detail is often of exquisite finish and beauty, yielded at last to men of larger thought and power, and a tree by Titian or Tintoret is a totally different thing from theirs. It stands, in its large contour and mass of umbrage, with scarce a leaf defined; it "lays large arms about the field," or sways in the blast, waving its mighty plumes. Yet these great painters knew where to spend their utmost precision. Tintoret, as we shall see in his *Entombment*, could draw leaf by leaf against intensest light. Titian showed the same care and particularity in that ivy tendril which rejoices Mr. Ruskin in the *St. Jerome* of the Brera; but Titian in that picture knew also where to indicate foliage with a large indistinctness of touch, though without losing any of its prevailing characteristics. So also Giorgione and Dürer fuse into natural masses the harsh hard rocks and sprinkled stones of Mantegna. In this way is given the larger truth, for literalism defeats itself; attempting too much, it reaches less. Try to depict the innumerable blades of grass in a field, and it will not look like a field. A sufficient indication that there are such innumerable blades may be given by generalisation, and the field as a soft expanse of verdure takes its true place in the scene.

Generalisation is, then, one of the means of securing that Organic unity of which we are speaking, for it gathers up a subject under

one predominant thought, and renders it an intelligible and weighty utterance. Frequently the excellence of a sketch—the rough strokes of a reed-pen in the hands of a great master—is due to nothing else.

For convenience sake we have, in discussing form, confined our illustrations chiefly to single objects, but it is obvious that the same principles apply to the arrangement of a number of objects in one scene. *Composition*, of which artists talk so much to the perplexity of the lay mind, resolves itself into this, that the whole scene is treated like a single object,<sup>1</sup> so that its lines (produced by the arrangement of its parts) are good in their curves, and are well opposed and combined; that its proportions are built up into a consistent and balanced whole; and that a manifest unity of purpose pervades the entire subject. So far the cyclamen leaves (Fig. 7) illustrate “composition.”

But in every natural scene perspective is a powerful agent in securing this unity. We have noticed how it draws the lines of all objects towards a common centre, and thus the law of radiation pervades a scene, however wide the prospect or varied its parts. Landscape is indeed always more or less of a vista, and the early Flemish and German painters were fond of showing it in its most simple and obvious form. They delighted in the still and shining reaches of a long stretch of water, with towns and towers on the low promontories on either side, lessening and lessening till among faint hills the faint line of light disappears. But the skill of later artists is exercised in throwing the centre on the one side or the other of the picture, and in breaking its regularity, as is constantly to be observed in nature by projecting forms, as clouds, trees, crags, or buildings. Thus the whole composition will tend towards the one principal expanse of light, and towards the object, be it figure, tree, or tower, which comes into most immediate contact and contrast with that light. But we are here somewhat anticipating—enough to say that the combinations are endless which avail for fine composition, as the reader may judge from the “laws” Mr. Ruskin enumerates—the laws of “Principality,” of “Repetition,” of “Continuity,” of “Curvature,” of “Radiation,” of “Contrast,” of

<sup>1</sup> “Composition means literally and simply putting several things together so as to make *one* thing out of them, the nature and goodness of which they all have a share in producing.”—Ruskin’s *Elements of Drawing*, p. 244.

“Interchange,” of “Harmony.” Subtle and varied as these appear in Mr. Ruskin’s eloquent exposition, the result is that ordered complexity in simplicity of which we have already said so much.

Complexity and simplicity are indeed alike essential. Without the first there can be little to tell; without the second no organic unity, no power to tell, or at least no greatness in the telling. The two must be combined. Let us illustrate the necessity by a familiar instance. In the Bay of Naples the one curve of shore is dominated by the one smooth expressionless cone of mountain. No subject is more difficult for art to deal with; it is only by the introduction of boats and clouds and shadows that the needful complexity is obtained,—only by skilful massing of these, the necessary unity.

Yet composition, however essential to fine work, is, strange to say, often found in connection with poor work, for it is a thing which can be taught; it can be reduced to rules, as has been seen, and may be practised—though not in its highest and most complex beauty—by those whose gifts do not rise above a capacity for learning how to follow rules. These mediocre men, however, never reach the refinement of a great master—refinements of which Turner has afforded the most superb examples in his perfectly-composed landscapes.

But this brings us to the picture, for to the picture in its completeness there are necessary two other attributes—SHADOW and COLOUR.

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The SHADOWS that fall among the objects of a natural scene greatly affect the forms of those objects. Their simplest effect is to explain and define them, giving what is called *relief* or projection. Perspective does something towards this, but, the moment shadow is added, the eye recognises at once solidity, and therefore projection. And then each solid object that under illumination shows a shaded side casts a shadow upon something else, and these cast shadows are of great service, since they connect objects with their surroundings, place them in a scene and bestow reality. Nothing “tells” with greater effect in scenery; and therefore it is that a landscape looks so much more interesting at morning or evening, for then the light is lower and the shadows are sharper and longer, throwing out every feature in the strongest relief, and making every tree, cottage, or stone, of value in virtue of its own particular shadow. Mount-

ains owe their most magnificent effects to shadows, which block out their large proportions, and sculpture their details in wonderful and clear relief.

But shadow in landscape plays other parts than that of explaining form, or setting a thing in its place. An object with the sun behind it will be all in shadow, or just rimmed round with light, and will thus gain in dignity and importance. In this way you may have large masses of shadow right in front of the eye—some mountain all a silhouette of shade, some heavy gloom of foliage, some frowning rock; this is a favourite effect with painters. And again, in landscape, apart from the proper shadows of an object, or those thrown upon it from its neighbours, there is a potent source of shadow in the clouds, those strange travellers of the sky which, passing across the sunlit blue, suddenly plunge leagues of landscape into dark eclipse, and obliterate for the nonce all objects therein. Yet there is compensation; these streams of shadow, coursing across the scene, diversify an otherwise tame expanse (see Fig. 8), mark out heights, distances, and particular objects—now a tract of wood is dipped in deepest purple, now a hill stands boldly out, and now a building or a tree is printed off black against a sunlit background, or shines in silver upon a distant darkness. Titian first made effective use of these flying shadows, and Salvator was not slow to avail himself of them.

Now it is plain that shadows which thus, from whatever source, invade a scene, constitute in fact so many diversified shapes at the painter's disposal—shapes or blotches which may be good or bad in their place, just as their lines and proportions arrange themselves. They are therefore an additional means in his hands for managing composition. But more than this, and chiefly, they aid him in producing unity of expression. Here we touch those higher ends which belong to art. Shadow may ennoble form by bringing out its larger and more imposing features, and obscuring the meaner and less important. This is a mode of generalisation, and secures a simplicity which the eye rests upon with satisfaction, while an impressive unity is obtained.

Shadow used for this end can readily effect a certain unity in a scene by simply narrowing the space upon which the eye, and consequently the attention, is directed; and every one knows how Rembrandt loved to immerse everything in darkness excepting the one head, figure, or group that makes the crisis of his subject. He

adopted this method also in landscape, but not so strikingly as in figures, which he illuminated from a single window. In landscape he is always mindful of the diffused light of day, and the tones of his shadows there are soft and tender. For when we speak of shadow we must remember that in scenery absolute shadows are rare; reflected light breaks into and softens the dead dull masses; light and air breathe everywhere, bestowing variety and grace. He who forgets this will have, as it is called, no atmosphere in his picture—a fault often to be remarked among masters of the Carracci school and their imitators. These and many of the older masters of landscape largely used shadow as a means of increasing the effect of distance and of the too obvious vista they were aiming at. For this purpose the foreground was almost invariably put into deep shadow, a somewhat coarse expedient, which modern delicacy of perception and execution has found ways of avoiding by paying more attention to gradations of colour. But shadow that is practically absolute occurs sometimes, and great use may be made of it in giving solemnity and grandeur, as in mountain scenes; while for a vivid effect the immediate opposition of the greatest dark to the greatest light, the dark, being in fact nothing more than a foil, is a favourite artifice. A nobler method of concentration, though not incompatible with a sparing use of the last, is not to oppose light and dark so much as to associate light with light, and dark with dark, thus reaching a simple and harmonious unity.

But all these uses of shadow yield in importance to that of affecting the imagination, for which it is especially fitted. To speak to the imagination is, as we have urged, the chief mission of art, and shadow appeals mightily to this faculty by reason of its inherent mystery and pathos.

That which is unknown is mysterious, and darkness is the great region of the unknown. Shadow, therefore, awakes the strange fascination which belongs to curious though baffled inquiry, and stirs the imagination to supply the void. Pathos no less dwells with shadow, aiding this appeal. Light, life, and joy are correlative terms; as light decays, a sense of loss, of regret, of sadness indefinable steals upon the soul; shadow, therefore, is pathetic, and shadows that come with evening upon a landscape are especially impressive. They rule vast spaces, they hide and hush the busy activities of the human world, and thrill with a sense of gathering night. Grandly do the shadows speak to him who from



some Alpine height, as the sun declines, watches them settle down—large, dark, and still—upon the rolling landscape, filling the hollows with a purple flood, and swathing the hills with darkness. In a lesser degree the cathedral porch, the cavern mouth, the jaws of the defile, the depths of a forest glade, solicit while they quell.

No wonder, then, that so many of the great painters have been great in the power of darkness. Let us not complain of occasional exaggerations. Let us not carp at sweeping glooms, gathered thunders, obscuring mists, and impenetrable depths, but accept them as the reflex of emotion and the emphasis of expression.

COLOUR next claims our attention. It is the final charm of the natural scene, but in saying this we do not mean that it is quite the highest. The pleasure derived from colour is more sensuous than that derived from form, but colour in landscape develops exquisite refinements, penetrates the heart with a sense of beauty, mystery, and pathos, and thus becomes one of nature's choicest gifts.

The mere brilliance of primary colours which attracts the uneducated eye is not what the artist seeks. Nature herself is very chary of such brilliance; she spares it for birds and flowers; she will embroider a thin tissue of cloud with threads of gold and crimson, and for a brief autumnal season will set the trees aflame and shake their gold and crimson against the "stedfast blue." But in her prevailing mood she spreads her quiet tints at large over woods and rocks, mountains and sweeping plains, the sea and the vault of heaven. Some instances are of special beauty. The rocks and olive woods of Southern Europe, and a winter woodside in England, are alike delightful for their grays, while a Scottish moor is rich in purple browns. And there is the still more excellent harmony produced by the admixture of bright and even opposing colours, refined by distance into one indescribable glow. A Welsh hillside lit up by a sun-gleam exhibits this happy intermingling of various tints, due to lichen-stained rock, heather, bracken, sunburnt grass, and gorse—tints which are, as it were, poured over its surface in molten streams. It is these, the harmonies, the modifications, the subtle blendings of colour, that delight the artist, as the delicate blendings of the curved and the straight in form, and as the tender mysteries of shade, delight him. In these are uttered the noblest speech of Colour.

But as opposition of line and proportion are needful to create

pleasure, so is opposition of colour needful, and this not only for the sake of variety and balance but for an actual effect upon the quality of colours produced by *Contrast*. By a skilful use of this, art can compensate for the dulness of its pigments and persuade the eye into almost any conviction. Nature provides such contrasts, not only in the occasionally startling tints we have referred to, but in many less obtrusive ways—in variety of soil and rock; in the stems and roots of trees; in ferns, heather, and the like; and it was the fault of the Academic schools of landscape that they sought for contrast in a coarser fashion. A mass of red brown foliage against the purples of hill or sky, or some gaily-dressed figures set in the foreground, was their only resource. Modern art, led by Turner, has more deeply read the art of nature, and exercised itself in refinements of contrast, in which, however, it must always be much assisted, when dealing with an extent of country, by such positive colours as the works and ways of man in buildings and costume afford.

But Colour in nature is modified in many ways. The chief agent of these changes in landscape is *Atmosphere*, which effects the most exquisite gradations. Under the name of “softness” gradation pleases the most superficial observer, but it is also high among the qualities to be attained by art. No object in nature, be it leaf or pebble, tree-stem or rock, but shows gradation; and if wonder be the first emotion excited by the utterly imperceptible transitions, a higher faculty of delight is touched by the indivisibility which obscurely links perfect gradation with ideas of infinitude, and a certain pathetic preciousness suggested by its seeming and often actual evanescence. It is especially so with the larger gradations due to atmosphere. From the foreground to the horizon, colour is graduated on a scale of infinite delicacy. This is “Aërial Perspective,” of as much importance and of more charm than linear. The breaks in a landscape, caused by ranges of successive elevation, sometimes involve the gradation in a marked series of steps, rendering the effect of distance upon colour more obvious; while sometimes, as in the vast Continental plains, the eye wanders without check over the vanishing expanse. The tender blues of distant mountains are full of loveliness, as are the soft receding azure of a sea-prospect and the reverse deepening of the sky-tints from the horizon upward to the zenith. Some of the earlier men, such as Van Eyck and Francia, were especially fascinated with these pure tints of distance.



But there is another sort of gradation, more complicated and not so readily appreciated, shown in the subtle blending of different tints in nature. The Venetians gave the clue to this, but Turner alone took it up, and almost lost himself amidst the interminable harmonies and interchange that belong to atmospheric effects. This endowed him with that power over distance which, as Mr. Hamerton observes, was a power unknown before in art. We have already noticed the rough method of foreground shadow, and Claude in addition managed lovely distances by means of the simple gradation of a single tint. Turner's eye pierced the infinite complexity of delicately interwoven hues that mingle and glow and fade in the trembling atmosphere.

Atmosphere gradates colours, but it also changes them. The green of near woods becomes a tender blue in the distance, richly-veined rocks a pale crimson, and the brown moorland or dark fir-wood a rich purple. These general facts are noticed by most of those whose rambles lead them into open country, but few observe how the green of a field alters as it recedes; a green field is to the ordinary eye green all over. The artist notices the varying quality of the green, that when the atmosphere is suffused with sunlight the nearer portion is almost golden, the distant verging towards gray. Thus mainly does it happen that gay and strong colours are so subdued in nature; though the actual earth be green below, and the sky bright blue above, yet these are both so modified by atmosphere as not to oppress the eye with any garish effect. Then, again, the colour of the atmosphere, depending upon certain conditions, and upon the position of the sun, tinges all colours. It alters a landscape as if seen through tinted glasses, so that atmosphere exercises a double ministry, harmoniously blending all tints into one, and softening them as they recede, till, mingling with those of the sky, it is sometimes hard to decide between the film of cloud and the far hillside it touches.

*Shadow* modifies colour. In distances shadow occasions a tender darkening of tint, as witness the shadows upon a plain or woodland far away. Or, again, there are the shadows that flit across the shining sea, offering hues all but inimitable, those of a snow-field in the Alps of surpassing delicacy, and there is the pearly wonder of a cloud when shadow rounds its bosom. Upon nearer objects, however, shadow, instead of darkening the particular local colour substitutes something else,—a coolness if the illuminated surface be warm,

or a warmth if, as in moonlight, the illumination be cold. Shadows thus break into colours with a delicious variety of neutral tones.

But here another agent in diversifying colour must be reckoned with, and that is *reflection*. From whatever surface reflections come, they bring with them something of the colour of that surface; hence the blueness of many shadows that receive the reflected light of the sky, and the warmth of a shadowed wall or rock against which the ground-tints strike. But other than shaded surfaces are thus affected. Look again at the sea, and mark how it receives upon its molten silver all the hues of the sky; or observe how the still lake returns those of its shores, or the pool is enriched with the colours of its shelving bank. Such reflections are bewitching in their translucent play; and colours of this sort, by reason of their dim and fitful character, bordering upon mystery, possess a secret hold upon the imagination. But reflections rule all landscape. From the great dome of heaven, curtained with clouds, reflected light pervades every scene, and according as the cope above is illuminated will be the colours of the world below.

*Transparency* imparts a peculiarly pure brilliance, not gay but soft. All coarseness or dulness vanishes, and the colours are penetrated with a hidden radiance which delights the fancy. The sun shining through a roof of leaves, as in a wood, or among the trellised vines of the South, produces a luscious golden green; and the glancing tremulous colours which play among the waters of shallow shores are captivating. Who that has seen the glowing topaz tints of Scotch or Yorkshire streams, or the amethyst of Italian lakes, but will admit the beauty of transparency? Yet art must be chary of these beauties, as nature is. Opacity has its satisfactions; the grainy solid masses, the sombre mingled glooms, feast the eye as with substantial wealth.

Such are some of those secrets of colour—curious surprises and evanescent graces—which it must be the object of the landscape painter to observe and record. But we must have more than this if his work is to be a work of art. Colour, like Form, like Shadow, must be subservient to a purpose.

If the painter be particularly sensitive to the beauty of colour he will be inclined to sacrifice or be careless about form. In the imperfection of human things we must probably consent to a good deal of this, enjoying what we get without insisting too much upon what we lose; and colour may indeed disguise form to its advantage,

wrapping it in a soft mantle, and withdrawing from view its more severe and uncompromising qualities. But the gracious aid is treacherous, and he who yields too far to the witchery of colour may soon forget the great and pure of nature's nobler self.

Colour, like shadow, may be made subservient to composition, or to that organic unity which is essential to excellence in any product of mind. In the mere concatenation and interchange of colours differing in size and intensity there is pleasure; here the artist touches immediately a fibre of delight. But to achieve organic unity there must be the gathering up of colours in vivid crises of effect, or their union in broad harmonious masses. Further, and above all, there must be an intelligent oneness of purpose. The colours of a kaleidoscope, the dabs upon a painter's palette, may possess a certain unity, but how inferior to that displayed upon the Welsh hillside we spoke of? There, all the colours following the moulding of the form, and betokening its ordered life of vegetation, contribute to a living whole and help to tell a story.

And Colour gives, as nothing else does, the sentiment of a subject. It has a special function in expressing the moods of nature. By virtue of an atmosphere steeped in colour, as we have already noticed, the whole scene shall swim in a golden flood, or flush one crimson, or lapse into cold and silvery sweetness. Such variations depend upon conditions of the hour. Others follow the steps of the year, and a scene may be gay with the grace of springtide, glow with the ruddy gifts of autumn, pale with winter, or darken in the storm. The character of the scene is told at once by its tone of colour. A morning or a sunset with Claude, an afternoon with Cuyp, an evening with Titian, are wrought with perfect unity of effect.

Colour in this respect holds high office in regard to imagination. Otherwise it scarcely makes so immediate and powerful an appeal as shadow; for though all the finer gradations and harmonies of colour possess both mystery and pathos in a high degree, they require more close and sympathetic observation. And, indeed, the most impressive tones of colour are often due to an admixture with shadow, or at least to a deprivation of light. They are fading colours, of which perhaps the loveliest example is the primrose tint of a twilight sky.

But there is one inevitable compromise attending every attempt of art to depict the colours of a natural scene. Illuminating power art has not, and therefore the highest brightness in a picture can

never be as bright as light. The gradations of nature are consequently impossible to attain, though some of the early painters, and notably J. Van Eyck, went very near to it. Beginning, then, with what is many degrees less than light, devices must be adopted for obtaining the effect of light. Some, like Van Eyck, sought this by a marvellous purity of pigment and execution. Others by the opposition of deepest darkness to brightest light; or by working from exaggerated foreground darks. Others by contrasted tints, or the elaborate gradation of suffused tones. Of the latter sort are the methods of the highest art, as they are nearest to the methods of nature.

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Let us now come to some general conclusions as the result of our survey of the pictorial language at the disposal of art in landscape.

Observe, then, in the first place, how it is open to art to lay hold of the inherent relations between the qualities of visible form and ideas, and to become thereby mistress of the language of nature, and able to speak as nature speaks. The artist can arrange for himself her lines, her colours, relieved from literal imitation, and in landscape is empowered to arrange her objects of beauty or grandeur into a scene, speaking therefore not only her thought but his thought. In fine, he possesses a power of original combination.

Again, that he is never a mere copyist appears from the necessary compromises which art must make with nature. We have touched upon this in speaking of outlines of which there are none in nature. We may instance further the appearance of relief, or of planes of distance which, however skilful the use of perspective and shadow, can never be fully accomplished upon a flat surface. And with respect to colour we have just seen that light cannot be reproduced in that which has itself to be illuminated. The inextricable maze of forms and colours in their due proportion cannot, in fact, be followed by any mortal hand. Fortunately the purposes of art can be served otherwise. Art is the handmaid of that faculty which seeks for and delights in the latent import and suggestiveness of the outward form, and that latent meaning, that subtle analogy, may be brought to view by what is far short of literal imitation. Nay, we may assert that the very highest qualities, measured as they affect the imagination, are the more powerfully rendered by the simplest means, for then the attention will be concentrated upon the thought rather than upon the thing.

Yet it must be remembered that on occasion the very object of art may be to draw attention to some exquisite delicacy, or to some special beauty of detail in nature. A faded oak-leaf, with colours rich and modulated beyond compare, may be the subject; it will reward the utmost elaboration, and a lovely work of art will be the result. Or it may be a moss-encrusted wall, a gray tree-trunk, graceful branch, or herbage of fragile beauty, has caught the artist's eye, and he desires to express its charm; indeed, whatever the subject, and however treated, there must be *something* of intense reality, be it the perfection of some detail, a striking effect or mood of nature, or there will be no worthy work of art.

This brings us to the distinction between the Real and the Ideal; it is difficult to put it into words, but it is a distinction to which we shall often have occasion to refer. It is obvious, for one thing, that the more the imagination of the artist is brought into play—a poetical imagination, for mere invention will not do—the more of the ideal there will be. Claude will sometimes build up temple upon temple, and pile rock upon rock, all out of his own head, and all according to excellent rules of composition, and yet show no more ideality than he does of reality. Invention only has been at work there. Rembrandt may take a homely scene, a hut, a few stakes, a mill, a farm, and behold a poem! a wonderful piece of idealism created out of the commonplace and intrinsically the realistic; for *out of the real must spring the ideal*.

But there must be this condition, that the Ideal shall have extracted from the Real its essential element—which is indeed its highest truth—be it of beauty, of pathos, of power, of grandeur; and that this is made the ruling thought, modifying form and colour, and light and shade, and adapting the whole composition to express it. We come here to much the same thing as in speaking of generalisation, the chief purpose of which is to serve the ideal presentation of an object; though this is helped also in other ways, such as the exaggeration to which we have referred. Take a simple instance. If a photographer follows an artist in picturing a mountain, it will certainly be found that the artist had much exaggerated the actual height; yet, after all, the sketch would be truer than the photograph, for it would convey that impression of grandeur which the spectator would always feel, but which the photograph had missed.

We have spoken of Claude as sometimes neither real nor ideal, but in his lovely distances,—in the effulgent calm he sheds upon his gentle hills and wide still waters,—we have a true ideal, for that sweet peace is a truth of nature, though rare in a combination as complete and harmonious. Salvator took what images he could find of tragic gloom and terror in nature—her torn crags, riven tree-trunks, blackening storms, ghastly gleams—and raised another ideal. But Turner is the great master of the ideal in landscape-art. His works are founded on memories, but they are visions more than memories.<sup>1</sup> Always there was some paramount suggestion from nature, but then the thing wrought itself into a vision; he was possessed as in a trance, and that which none but a poet could have imagined came in colour upon his canvas.

Lastly, we are led to review the grounds of artistic selection in landscape. Why is one scene better fitted than another for representation? Why is one point of view better than another? A simple answer would be that art must be ruled in its selection by the picturesque, but the word itself requires explanation, and perhaps we may obtain this best by contrasting an object which is not picturesque with one that has that quality.

Compare then a new field-gate, square and tight, newly painted and seen in front, with a nodding, crazy, weather-stained stile. The latter goes into the sketch-book as picturesque, the former is instinctively avoided for such a purpose. The difference consists, in the first place, in the character of the lines, proportions, shadows, colours. The lines of the stile are curved, broken, and, especially when seen in perspective, come in a variety of angles, while from the same cause the composition will be varied. In the gate the lines are straight, the angles at the point of view all right angles, and there is no composition. The shadows of the stile are naturally more complex with the greater complexity of form, than they will be in the gate, and they will be of a more delicate tint, for the colours of the stile from age and weather are altogether enriched, subdued, and blended, while those of the gate are crude and staring. Then as to unity of expression, the gate is certainly not without the mechanical unity of an object fitted for use,—so far there is fitness in proportion and construction; but of how much richer elements is the unity of the stile composed! How much of story there is in it!

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Hamerton agree in this; see *Modern Painters* for the former.



The stile leans with the stress and weight of years—its feet are buried in undisturbed herbage; worms have covered it with elaborate tracery—lichens have crept into every cranny. It has been bleached by sun and shower, polished by the hands and grated by the feet of many a labourer who, year after year, has crossed it on his outward and homeward way. It is hacked by generations of schoolboys, and is cunningly inscribed with the joint initials of whispering lovers. See how the stile speaks to the imagination, while the gate has nothing to say! The stile is full of sentiment and full of history, while the gate in its naked newness speaks only of the carpenter's shop and the paint-pot! In the language of art the one, if not exactly beautiful, is picturesque, while nothing can make the other so.

Now it is obvious that we may carry out the principles upon which the picturesqueness of the stile depends, into a scene of which the stile shall be only a single incident. We may have a landscape picturesque all through—very picturesque; nevertheless we may not have a work of fine or noble art, and the question still to be asked is, What in landscape constitutes such a work? What more is wanting? We reply, the subordination of the picturesque itself to the rendering of some fine or noble theme—to the expression of a noble ideal. There must be given (to return again to our illustration) a greater thought in its unity than the individual stile or any number of similar objects can supply. The thought suggested must be of wider range, or the record of time of larger scope, or the pathos of a deeper import, than the mere picturesque is ever equal to. The work must be felt to touch more or less upon some of the great mysteries that surround us, mental or moral, the pregnant symbols of which pervade the visible creation and are specially present in fine landscape.

Noble art gathers up the noble elements of the noble spectacle. It renders the sublimity of which the great scenes are full. We have already spoken of mountain masses, of the boundless sea, plains dim with vastness, and we may add to these objects of grandeur the lucid infinity of the sky, and the solemn atmospheric effects by which nature enhances grandeur. They call up in the human soul ideas of immensity, of power, of everlastingness, and art can repeat in measure the same spells. But above all, nature provides inexhaustible pathos. Forms, and shadows, and colours, as they are displayed in landscape, have all this gift of pathos; it is their choicest quality, as in speaking of each of them we have

already shown. There is the pathos of beauty—the grace, the frailty, the evanescence, one knows not what, which sends a pang to the heart; of mystery that the soul sighs in vain to penetrate; of immensity which it cannot fill;<sup>1</sup> of time in its passing days and seasons, signs of growth and decay, and of age-long work, that all preach the pathos of mutability. And constantly mingling with all this there is the pathos that hangs about every human thing associated with nature. See the lonely bark upon the ocean, the cottage on the mountain-side, the towered city crumbling year by year on the shore of a river that flows for aye. Everywhere the feeble life of man is seen striving with, and in peril of extinction from, the more mighty life around. Should it surprise us that nature is pathetic? If there is “the sense of tears in mortal things,”—tears that are associated not only with all that is frail but all that is noblest in man,—it were strange indeed if the great spectacle of nature were without answering significance.

It is the highest function of landscape-art to recognise and develop this sympathy of nature with the burdens of humanity. We shall see indeed that the perception of this pathos was of slow growth in art as it was in literature, but there is reason to believe, as we have already suggested, that it was far sooner understood in art than in literature. Its dawn appears in that gradation of the sky tints in early illuminations, which Mr. Ruskin declares to be the beginning of all landscape. In that gradation lay the rudiment of a wonderful pathos. But for centuries the tender opaline blue and the bright green of spring sufficed, except that clouds, even the white woolly wisps of the early men, brought in a new element, for there was pathos in the first stray wandering vapour. Then came evening lights, and deeper tones, and streaming shadows, and cloud grandeur, and mountain grandeur, and the pathos (with all its splendour) of Venetian colour. Vast Claude distances of sea and land succeeded, and the pathos of peace. Salvator, as we have said, wrought with other elements; his was the pathos of the wilderness. Germans and Dutchmen broke into the forest with its silent alleys, or strayed among the tall, rustling, shadow-haunted trees by roadside or meadow, and wherever there was fine work of this sort there was pathetic suggestion. Dutchmen gave the world the pathos of the

<sup>1</sup> When a lonely tree on a distant hill is seen against the clear unfathomable depth of a twilight sky, whence comes the overpowering sense of pathos? Is it not from the contrast suggested between the Individual and the Infinite?



plain, of the sandy dunes, of the watery misty skies, of the melancholy main; nay, they found it where the still sunshine rested upon tall red houses on the banks of a canal, and certainly were not slow to discover the pathetic mystery of moonlight. So it went on, though often enough falling into the conventional and the commonplace, till Gainsborough took up the rural beauty of England—a beauty essentially pathetic in its picturesqueness and simple charm; and then finally Turner, supreme in landscape, brought out the pathos of nature in its grandest tones and most tender melodies. Landscape-art has taken no higher flight—we doubt if it ever will—than Turner at his best. It is great art, picturesque to the uttermost in every detail, but the picturesque controlled and worked into a profound and noble unity of expression, and pathetic to the core.

We have used the word “conventional,” and it behoves us to dwell a moment before we close upon that disease of art of which we shall find too many traces in all schools—it is indeed especially a “school” disease. Given a man of industry, and clever ready execution, of learning in his art, and up to all its tricks, but without original genius or powers of delicate observation, or perception of the pathetic—a man whose ambition it is to paint in a certain style popular at the moment—such a man will produce conventional work, yards of it!

Conventionalism may be displayed in merely technical facility, the result of no special individual study of nature, but only a sort of artistic shorthand, taught in the schools and containing therefore no individual utterance; a facility which composes cleverly and throws in stock picturesque effects in shadow and colour; or it may be shown in tame laborious finish of insufferable monotony. In a word, conventional art is hand-work more than either head-work or heart-work, while yet not inconsistent with a certain sort of ability. Sometimes conventionalism characterises a whole school, as in a great measure that of the Carracci, and as again in the Dutch imitators of Italian landscape. It always, indeed, accompanies a decline of power, and some weary forthcoming pages will have to be devoted to it. All the more interesting, we trust, will those outbursts of living power prove, which from time to time refresh the fields of art.

Such outbursts belong to individuals; they belong to certain names of note, the very sight of which in a catalogue redeems its dulness. No one has been really great in art who has not revealed

a great personality, and then it is the artist's revelation of himself, his particular utterance, that enchains us. It is well it is so, for thus the story of art is enriched with individual interest, and though these pages are little more than an introduction to the history of landscape-art, they deal with a long roll of names as they seek to show what each great man did, or did not do, towards its ultimate development.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE LANDSCAPE OF ANCIENT ART.

Egyptian — Assyrian — Indian — Chinese — Japanese. GREEK : — Polygnotus — Agatharchos — Scenery of the Greek stage — Apollodorus — Zeuxis — Parrhasius — Apelles — Genre-painting — Mural decoration. ROMAN : — Pompeian — An olive grove — Coast scenery — Scenic illusion — Wall-paintings at Rome — Ludius — Livia's Villa — Tombs — The Palestrina Nymphæum — The *Odyssey* pictures. Summary.

OUR survey of "Landscape in literature" showed how gradually, to what a limited extent, and with what curious fluctuations, a taste for natural scenery was displayed. In art, landscape as itself a subject is only some two hundred years old. But there was a long preparation for this development, and if we would witness the beginnings, and observe the progress of landscape in art, we must betake ourselves in the first instance to ancient wall-paintings, mosaics, and illuminations, and then by aid of fading frescos, darkened panels, and the works of great men, to whom landscape was but byplay, trace the gradual emergence of a true living and separate line of art. These initial stages have been much overlooked.<sup>1</sup> Subordinate always to subjects of human or supernatural interest, landscape came in as a mere accessory, upon which the eye, even of the critic, scarcely rested. It filled up an unnoticed corner, or was but a peep through a window; many a lovely bit has thus for ages "wasted its sweetness," while the quaintness and oddity of earlier specimens may have only raised a smile. But there was a genuine budding efflorescence all the while; the poetry of nature was surely, if slowly, asserting itself, till at last it bloomed into a richness that attracted all eyes. We think we shall be able to lead the reader into "pastures new" in this direction, and notwithstand-

<sup>1</sup> The greater part of this work was written long before the appearance of Dr. Woermann's *Die Landschaft in der Kunst der Alten Völker*, but I am bound to acknowledge my great obligations to that exhaustive work in respect of this introductory portion of my subject.

ing what has been already said in the eloquent if discursive pages of *Modern Painters*.

"The ancients," as we call them, looked in their turn for the origin of all learning and the arts of life, towards those earlier ancients, the immemorial dwellers on the banks of the Nile, and Egyptian art claims from us a preliminary word. Yet how far can we call that "art" which portrayed only innumerable silhouettes along the walls, slim identical shadows for the most part, performing their busy deeds in endless iteration? Is it much other than symbolic writing that we see? This becomes the more evident as we discover that perspective is absolutely wanting. Figures are doubled, or they walk over the heads of others; they never recede into a distance; and as for landscape, the scene in which these strange shapes of men act their parts is simply indicated by signs—or it is a map or ground-plan, not a view. As, however, Egyptian painters could put a figure upon its legs, they could also put a palm tree or a cypress beside it, though in strict identity of pattern. For water they knew nothing better than to paint a stripe of blue, and to fill it up perpendicularly with zigzag black lines. Egypt possesses in the yellow Nile, the narrow strip of verdure, the gray and speckled desert, the solemn rock, fewer of the elements of landscape than any other historic land, and this barrenness is reflected on its pictured walls.

On the other hand, the architecture of these walls bears witness to the profound influence of this peculiar scenery upon the Egyptian mind. To the wide expanse, the long ranges of treeless rock, the sand mounds, and the changeless sunlight, pyramid and pylon, obelisk and sphinx, are fit companions. They rule the scene with a congenial massive simplicity. But it is beside our purpose to dwell upon the expression of ideas by mallet and chisel. Leaving Egypt, let us see whether the Asiatic mind betrays in its pictorial art any greater familiarity with landscape.

Assyria, as its palace courts disclose their scenes of conquest or of sport, shows a sturdy race in vigorous life. Here there is more of art than of symbol, and as art involves representation we have more of landscape, which forms indeed a distinctly component part of many subjects. Dr. Woermann remarks that in the Assyrian pictorial records "the connection of the action with its scenery is often exhibited in a manner much more adapted than in those of Egypt to produce upon the eye something like a true idea of space."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *History of Painting*, p. 27.

That they could only attempt this in relief was unfortunate, but the intention is remarkable; it is the forerunner of perspective. In the elaborate work of Dr. Woermann upon the *Landscape of Ancient Peoples*, an Assyrian<sup>1</sup> landscape is given, in which a hill is indicated with steep unequal sides; trees, fairly like fir trees, but probably an accepted conventionalism, cover its sides; water at its foot is shown not only by fishes and boats, but expressed by flowing lines—a clear advance upon the Egyptian zigzags. And now and then the Assyrian artist startles us with a symptom of picturesque nature, as in a tree, Fig. 11, in one of Sennacherib's great scenes of war now in the British Museum;—do we detect the same hand in the camel that

stoops to browse in another of the series, and in the numerous palm trees under which the long processions pass? Yet when we come to a rocky country, expressed only by something like rows of fir cones, over which the warriors' horses tramp, we feel that landscape is still a good way off. Upon the whole we may say that though much is but shorthand for a picture, there is in Assyrian art a germ of true realistic landscape.

FIG. 11.—ASSYRIAN TREE.

The art of the remoter East has but little to do with our purpose, but before proceeding further we may glance at what seems to have been its relation to landscape.

Indian antiquity offers strange contrasts to both Egypt and Assyria. The Indian mind expressed itself far more nobly in literature than in art, and we have already shown that Indian poetry displayed a remarkable susceptibility to effects in nature and to the charm of scenery. This feeling, some have supposed, is shown in the picturesque adaptation of natural caves to sacred purposes, as at Ellora—a questionable argument; more to the purpose is the fact that from the fifth century down to the thirteenth A.D., plant-forms conventionalised were extensively used in the ornamentation of capitals and scrolls, and that, as we are assured by Mr. Ferguson, "the frescoes of Ajunta are full of representations of landscapes,

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced in Messrs. Woltmann and Woermann's *History of Painting*.

conventionalised it must be confessed, and in horrid perspective, but not without feeling for the beauties of nature, and with a certain power of execution." Fig. 12, from a cave-fresco of the seventh

FIG. 12.—FROM THE CAVES AT BAGH.

century, illustrates Mr. Ferguson's meaning,<sup>1</sup> and we may point out in it the artistic feeling which prompted putting one of the palm trees in shade. The dates above do not indeed answer to what is

<sup>1</sup> The sketch represents a small portion of a drawing kindly supplied by Mr. Ferguson. I may here quote what the same high authority says in opposition to the grotto theory of Dr. Woermann referred to above. "There is nothing cavernous or grotto-like in the Indian rock-cut temples. They are all literal copies of structural buildings, and not one of them would appear anomalous if erected in the open." It was more, it seems, convenience of material than any other reason that induced the resort to caves.

meant by Indian antiquity any more than to that of Greece, but the work of these periods may represent a much older tradition. The same may be said of the more modern Indian miniature-work, in which there is a good deal of landscape of a gay archaic character, possibly the counterpart of something of the sort in ancient times. That this may have been so is supported by a passage in "Kalidasa," who represents a king desiring a picture which, in lieu of one sent to him, shall show the river where he met his beloved, the flamingos standing on its banks, and the Himalaya mountains beyond, "the home of the gazelles"; one of which he wishes also to be introduced under a tree. But whether any artist of Kalidasa's time could have portrayed such a scene is another matter; the utter ignorance of perspective must have had the usual results.

On the whole, then, we may say that though the superior poetical faculty of India would lead us to expect a landscape-art of far more abundance and fancy than either Egypt or Assyria has to show, the Indian preference for the mystical in mythology and story told against the introduction of landscape in public buildings.

The name of China suggests at once an interminable amount of curious landscape material, used for decorative purposes. It is material only, however, and put in the oddest juxtaposition, not absolutely without perspective, but rather with a jumble of perspectives spread over the surface of the space allotted, after the manner of a bird's-eye view. Every landscape feature seems to be there, but in forms of strange and unvarying conventionality, which Dr. Woermann calls "the conventionality of an archaic helplessness." Yet it should be remembered that the object of Chinese art, as of all early art, was decorative, not primarily pictorial, and that there is an effectiveness and rude truthfulness in the way in which things are rendered, since the bizarre look of trees and rocks is characteristic of many portions of the actual scenery. This creates a marked distinction between Chinese art and any we have yet noticed. That it is chiefly ceramic art should also be remembered, for this regulates the style; but there is certainly an attempt in a rough way to copy nature.

But it is soulless copying. Max Müller says that "we find in China an ancient, colourless, and unpoetical religion—a religion we might almost call monosyllabic, consisting of the worship of a host of single spirits, representing the sky, the sun, storms and lightning, mountains and rivers, one standing by the side of the other without

any mutual attraction, without any higher principle to hold them together."<sup>1</sup> Chinese art in this respect is an exact counterpart of Chinese religion ; there is no perception of unity, no sense of mystery or majesty, certainly no poetry. It is a "monosyllabic" landscape, composed of separate objects side by side. Two or three houses stand for a town, two or three trees for a wood, a mountain or two for a range. There is no commingling and binding together as a scene in nature is presented to the eye, while yet it is very different from the sturdy shorthand of the Assyrian tablets. This is truly an "archaic helplessness," for it attempts a landscape it cannot compass ; but the impotence is common to all early attempts of the sort, though in China the prodigality of objects renders it the more striking.

That the landscape should always show an inhabited country, and be full of the occupations of life, is essential ; and again this is not peculiar to China, as we shall have abundant reason to notice ; Chinese art portrayed what it saw around it in a densely populated country. It is also a note of reality that water is a constant element, for habitation there is characteristically associated with the canal and the stream. No less necessary is the garden, a great institution in China, and in laying out of which, strange to say, there seems to have been, in the most important instances, a positive feeling for "the free and unconstrained" in nature. Such at least are the words of an ancient Chinese writer upon gardens quoted by Humboldt.<sup>2</sup> Yet when we come to descriptions of actual gardens we find, along with the idea of a park or "paradise," a prevailing tendency towards the artificial, from the childish surprises accomplished by freaks of water, and shrines and summer-houses in unexpected spots, to the amazing attempt of one emperor to lacquer the stems of trees ! and of another to supply his trees in winter with artificial leaves ! It is this artificiality that finds special record in Chinese art, where the garden always appears with neat fences, ornamental trees, tea-houses and temples, streams and lakes, toy bridges and boats.

One notable quality of this art yet remains, and that is its sense of colour. The Chinese certainly rejoiced in the clear bright tints of nature, in the green of vegetation, the blue of the sky, the gorgeous hues of flowers, fruits, and birds, and in the vivid contrasts of colour that man and his works introduce in a natural scene. These colours they harmonised with wonderful skill and peculiar delicacy. So far as the decorative is concerned, the effects are

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures on the Science of Religion*, p. 156.

<sup>2</sup> *Cosmos*, ii. 97.



charming, but they are not those of a real landscape, for, though beautiful in themselves, they want the unity of nature, which is also absent in the general composition.

Japanese landscape-art is of too modern development to be fairly compared with the Chinese, or to come within our present scope, but we cannot omit some notice of its remarkable qualities. For one thing, it is to a considerable extent pictorial, and not merely decorative. It is capable of setting forth a scene, as the frequent introduction of the snowy peak of Fusihama shows. It studies natural forms, and renders them with freedom and a decided sense of the picturesque. It can represent the region of clouds and

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FIG. 13.—MOUNTAIN PEAKS, FROM A JAPANESE JAR.

mountain peaks with but little of the oddity which is characteristic of China, and which belongs also to much mediæval European art. In Fig. 13, taken from a jar, the mountain drawing is fairly good, the fir tree is put in as a modern painter would do it, and the clouds are well intended, though the gold upon them, and the delicate tints of rose, are out of keeping.<sup>1</sup> But as a rule Japanese colour is poetical and true, not merely decorative, and, however rich, attempts to follow nature in her splendid sunsets, and other landscape effects. That books or albums of landscape subjects should

<sup>1</sup> Whether the dots (golden in the original) sprinkled about the sky represent birds I do not know. Nor can I give the date of this naturalistic representation.

be produced is an extraordinary fact, but the Japanese are altogether extraordinary, a solecism in the East, and unique in history.

From this digression we return to the West, where, among intellectual, energetic, and progressive races, art was to develop all its powers, and at last discover the resources that lay to hand in landscape.

A beauty of land and sea surrounded the Greek of which neither Egyptian nor Assyrian had experience; but as nothing remains to show what the illustrious roll of Greek painters actually achieved, so there is nothing to show how they treated landscape. Yet, as we know from records that there was high pictorial art in Greece, so we have grounds for judging that landscape of no mean order was included in it.

Ingenious attempts have been made to estimate the Greek feeling for nature by an examination of the reliefs, sometimes of a landscape character, on the pedestals of statues, and on the pediments and among the metopes of temple architecture. But not much is to be gained beyond the recognition that the Greeks, especially in the time of Praxiteles, possessed a certain freedom in sculpturing even such awkward things for the chisel as waves of the sea,—a freedom, however, which did not apply, or to their severe taste was not thought appropriate, to foliage, for bare stems and branches, or single leaves, were in that case deemed sufficient.

But what we want to know is not how the sculptors, but the painters, with their very different appliances and objects, treated this matter. Towards this knowledge we have only descriptions of pictures and the particular fame of the men to help us. Thus it is something to be told that Polygnotus (flourished B.C. 463-435, and his is the earliest great name) painted pebbles as seen under water; this was a painter-like achievement, but what we further know of Polygnotus, apparently the first colourist, implies the absence rather than the presence of landscape. In his two great pictures at Delphi, termed the "Iliad and the Odyssey of Polygnotus," "a house or a wall represented a city, a man throwing down the stones of the wall the destruction of the city, a tent an encampment, the taking down a tent a departure, and a ship a fleet."<sup>1</sup> This is not the same sort of abbreviation which we have seen in Chinese art; it was not part of a scene at all, it was not properly background. Polygnotus followed in fact the simplicity belonging to sculpture, and these accessories

<sup>1</sup> Wornum's *Epochs of Painting*.

were only introduced as poetical abstractions to explain the action of his figures. The background proper was one uniform and probably white tint. Polygnotus seems, however, to have been the first to discover some of the resources of painting, since he not only depicted pebbles under water, but a female form beneath a transparent veil. To be able to imitate transparency was something towards the landscape which was yet to come.

It is probable, however, that the first real step towards landscape had already, or about the same time, been taken, and by one whose name actually does not appear in the ordinary annals of art—Agatharchos, employed by the Greek Theatre, and called by Plutarch “the father of scene-painting.” We have spoken of the attention bestowed by Sophocles upon this adjunct of theatrical representation, and it was Agatharchos who served both him, and to some extent his predecessor Æschylus, in this particular. Now, as the very essence of scene-painting is illusion, and illusion chiefly by means of perspective, to the use of which in Greek scene-painting we have the testimony of ancient writers, it seems likely that Agatharchos was called “the father of scene-painting” because he first made use of converging lines in setting forth his scenes.

But how far were these scenes of a landscape character? They might have been only architectural. Here there is room for much discussion, which has not been wanting. Some have held that a permanent representation of a royal palace, or façade of a temple, was sufficient; but an analysis of the thirty-three existing tragedies shows that fully one half would require open country for a background, and that where this is only partially the case, as in the *Electra* of Sophocles, yet in such a passage as “At length thine eye beholds what it has so long desired—the venerable grove,” we may be sure that Sophocles, who was particular about his scenery, would take care to have the grove within sight upon the stage.

Dr. Woermann enters very elaborately upon this question, distributing the plays into no less than six classes for the purpose of analysis. In five of these classes he finds indication of what is at least akin to landscape. In the sixth he enumerates those in which more or less of real landscape was required. For instance, there is the *Cyclops* of Euripides, in which there would certainly be shown the cave, and several allusions in the text would lead us to suppose Ætna also. Next are the *Choephoroe*, the *Suppliants*, and the *Prometheus* of Æschylus. In the first of these, all that the

text makes certain is the tumulus of Agamemnon, at some distance from the city, but there were probably landscape accessories. In the *Suppliants* would appear the hilly country by the seashore, and the far-reaching open grove, with perhaps the town of Argos. The scenery required for the *Prometheus* is abundantly indicated by the poet:—"The uninhabited wilderness on the distant edge of the world, the steep wall of rock, the storm-surrounded gorge, the dreadful deep-sunk rocks, where the clear light of the sun never reaches, the billowy river, and the endless glitter of the tossing sea." All this would find some sort of presentment. In the plays of Sophocles those demanding landscape are—the *Philoctetes* and the *Œdipus at Colonus*. These latter are important. Philoctetes lives in a cave, and in the background must have been visible the volcano of which the flames are apostrophised; while the reference to the bay with its steep rocks, and the words in which Philoctetes at the end takes leave of the sea, would have had no meaning in the absence of appropriate representation. Then in the *Œdipus at Colonus* Antigone describes the scenery to her blind father, and she could not have pointed out objects that were not within sight of the spectators. "Here," observes Woermann, "it is most to be expected that Sophocles would take care that the deep and delicate feeling for nature breathed in this his latest work, should be supported by all the newly acquired resources of art."

These conclusions of Dr. Woermann are certainly very interesting, but the question occurs, How far would those "resources of art," in the time of Agatharchos, avail for the representation required? and we are inclined to think that at so early a date they could not have been equal to much. There would have been little difficulty in presenting farmhouses and buildings generally; a grove might have been given, in the style of much mediæval illumination by a series of upright stems, bearing a mass of undefined umbrage; rocks would be shown of crude conventional form, and the familiar shape of some mountain might be fairly represented. But the wild Promethean landscape, with its "tossing glittering sea," seems much more within the range of poetry to describe, than of the art of that day to picture. We may question how much of sentiment it could convey. Dr. Woermann confesses that the "peace and stillness" dwelt upon by Agamemnon in the *Iphigeneia* would scarcely be rendered by the scene-painter. Plutarch tells two stories of Agatharchos which are suggestive. One is, that

he boasted of his rapidity to Zeuxis; and the other, that Alcibiades shut him up in his house till he had finished painting it. These indicate a rough and ready style, sufficient for the early drama, but not capable of refined expression. Again the high horizon, which Woermann admits was adopted, would tend much towards prosaic representation.

Still, when we consider the immense importance of linear perspective to landscape, we may accord to Agatharchos, who apparently first applied it, the high honour of being not only the father of scene, but of landscape-painting; for he first made it possible to carry the eye along a vista extended behind the figures in the foreground; he first made it possible to paint a natural scene.

But if Agatharchos was the first to show how landscape could be painted behind the living figures of the stage, who should show both figures and landscape in one picture? This advance there is reason to attribute to Apollodorus (about 400 B.C.) He first, instead of the single-tint background of Polygnotus, associated his figures with a background of objects, and presumably with more or less of landscape. He, too, is judged to have first developed panel-painting—that is to say, pictures entirely independent of architecture or wall-decoration,—pictures, therefore, devoted absolutely to subjects of their own. Here then was a painter beginning to set forth his thought by itself, untrammelled by external considerations, and this was really an essential step towards landscape-painting, for it made it possible, in course of time, to take a mood of nature for inspiration, and to express, by means of natural objects and effects, thoughts of beauty and grandeur. No doubt this was far beyond the aim of Apollodorus, nor have we ground for supposing that Greek painting ever made landscape the principal subject of a picture; it was never more than background, but it was so in the hands of consummate masters of their craft.

The renown of Apollodorus, however, rests upon still another achievement. He was the first to attain “an approximate imitation of the various effects of light and shade invariably seen in Nature.”<sup>1</sup> It was this that made Pliny call him “the opener of the gates of art;” it was this that charmed his contemporaries, and gave him the title of the “shadow-painter.” By this, certainly, he opened the gates for that art which depends so much upon shadow for its mystery and pathos; and if, as is argued by some, Apollodorus in-

<sup>1</sup> Wornum's *Epochs of Painting*.

troduced gradation of tints, as well as gradation of light, he made a discovery of the greatest moment on behalf of landscape.

It is only as perfecting technical methods, and as excelling more and more in the truthful representation of natural objects, that we can regard the great names of Zeuxis, Parrhasius, and Timanthes as having any connection with our subject. If Zeuxis, for instance, so far excelled Apollodorus in treatment of light and shade, as to be called the true discoverer of *chiaroscuro*—to the chagrin of Apollodorus, who complained that Zeuxis had robbed him of his art—we may acknowledge the indebtedness of landscape-art to him. We have, however, a glimpse afforded us of one vanished picture by Zeuxis, in which landscape was certainly associated with figures. Lucian describes a famous group of Centaurs, in which the female Centaur reposes with her young upon “a grass-plot of the most glossy verdure,” the father of the family being seen upon an elevation behind her. One would like to know whether trees or rocks surrounded that meadow,—whether the sky overarched it? but here we are left to conjecture.

If, again, Parrhasius were so skilful in rounding objects that Pliny said “they seemed to promise something behind, and even suggest what they conceal,” we discern a gift in which landscape would find its advantage.

Encaustic—the art of painting in wax, and thus obtaining a finish and brilliancy similar to that of oil—was, it is said, brought to perfection by Pamphilos, the master of Apelles, and for this he deserves our mention, since in such brilliancy there may have been an anticipation of the pure skies and glowing sunlight of Van Eyck. But a more important name to us is that of Pausias, who carried out the teachings of Pamphilos, and was famous for transparency and gradations of colour—accomplishments which may account for his reputation as a flower-painter. Now, flowers bring us into the garden, and from the garden the transition is easy to the field or the wood!

We cannot claim the most famous of all Greek painters—Apelles, court painter to Alexander the Great—as having developed anything of special value to landscape-art. His fondness for allegory was indeed somewhat inimical to it; he who personified the phenomena of the weather by female figures was not likely to have studied those phenomena as they swept over sky and hill and sea, or to have cared to reproduce them on the panel; though we must admit that the personification of natural objects, as streams and fount-



ains, did not supersede, but curiously intermingled with, ancient landscape-painting. One technical gift of Apelles has played no small part among technicalities in landscape-art,—transparent glazing, which, evidently as a new thing, he is said to have applied. Nor has the one great excellence of his art been without its counterpart in landscape—grace—that charm of beauty which fills the spirit of the beholder with inexpressible yearning; in this resides the choicest secret of landscape power. Was not Turner in this a true disciple of Apelles?

“Genre-painting,” which deals with the “actual and common world”<sup>1</sup> of men and things, leans on one side so closely upon scenery, that we cannot omit noticing one or two of the later Greek painters who took that line. Parrhasius leads the way with the subject of a Thracian nurse carrying a child on her arm. Pausias painted his mistress as a seller of garlands—a “flower-girl.” Protogenes was the great master of realism, and the fame of his partridge, and of the foam upon a dog’s lips—effected at last by the fling of his sponge—have been handed down the literature of art. More especially there was Periakos, who painted barbers’ shops, cobblers’ stalls, asses, eatables, etc.; here was the natural man among natural things, and landscape of at least a homely—may be, of a very picturesque sort, is not far off.

We have now, however, reached the period of decline in the art of Greece, as in everything else. From the crowning charm—the grace of Apelles—there was a rapid fall in art power. The most exquisite sense of beauty is not of itself enough to sustain art in perfection; it seems almost as if after that splendid bloom the plant is exhausted: such exhaustion succeeded Raphael. Still less will technical skill avail to support alone the high mission of art, so that its decadence in Greece was but an early illustration of a common law. But if, as there is reason to believe, landscape subjects came at this period more and more into use, it might seem as if landscape, for which we claim so much, was associated with that decline! It may have been so; there is room for the assertion, however it may be explained, that such a conjunction occurred in the later history of art; but in the present case it may be questioned how far the landscape spoken of was other than the art, not of the artist, but of the decorator. It began, we have seen, in the illusions necessary for the stage—rapid and transient illustrations; it was never

<sup>1</sup> Wedmore’s *Masters of Genre-Painting*.

more than background, however skilfully handled by the greatest Greek masters, not attaining even that semi-independence which we shall find when it was still only background in Italian and German art. The glory of Grecian art was that it saw and gave all the beauty and expressiveness of the human form, but the very intensity of that perception blotted from its view the beauty and expressiveness of natural scenery; and, while the scene-painting of the stage was too flimsy and coarse for its development, as background to a superb display of human emotion or human beauty it was also too subordinate. And if such was the case in the great days gone by, it would certainly be so in the days of only clever execution, elaborate finish, and literal imitation.

Moreover, what we read of it now is simply mural. Vitruvius tells us that at this time—during the successors of Alexander from 300 B.C.—“harbours, promontories, coasts, rivers, wells, straits, temples, hedges, mountains, flocks and herdsmen,” together with scenes from the *Odyssey*, with landscape accessories, formed the staple of mural decoration; we do not hear of it otherwise, and it is obvious that, with a profusion of landscape objects, there is little indication of landscape subject, with the exception of the *Odyssey* scenes—a remarkable exception, of which more presently. For the rest, the things he describes were no doubt lively and amusing to look at; we shall find plenty of the same in later Roman art, but we readily perceive that such representations might naturally belong to an age of deteriorated taste; they might, except for the addition of perspective, truth of drawing, and better arrangement, be little superior to the Chinese style of landscape.

We cannot consent, then, to date any real development of landscape from this period of decline, although it is probable that the way in which the world was now thrown open to armies, to commerce, to travellers, and the large business done upon all “coasts,” would raise a general interest in scenery; and the fact is to be noted that representations connected with it had become popular. This must needs prove of eventual importance in the history of landscape-painting, while it is also to be remembered that, little as the great Greek masters may actually have been concerned with landscape, they established the principles ultimately to be applied to it.

Greek painting, unlike its sculpture, has perished, but we must remember how much it gave to Rome, and how much of late years



has been recovered from that source. The discovery of what the lava and ashes of Vesuvius had securely sealed for ages has given us much enlightenment, and the fact that there exists at Naples, in the vast collection of Pompeian and Herculaneum relics, a so-called "landscape room," asks for our particular attention. In that room,

FIG. 14.—GATEWAY, FROM A POMPEIAN PICTURE.

however, the examples are mostly small, very slight, and placed, too, where it is difficult to examine them; while in many instances the high horizons, verging upon an impossible bird's-eye view, the multitude of objects and the confused perspective suggest a poverty of art.

Closer inspection and the examination of certain backgrounds to larger subjects in the collection, convey another impression. What

presently attracts attention is the extraordinary freedom, and often the grace, of the foliage. In even the rudest sketches—and much of this Pompeian work is rough and hasty—there is a thorough feeling for the picturesque; let us instance the tree that has grown through an old gateway, and spreads its shade above, in Fig. 14. Or, taking one of the larger and more finished examples, notice in Fig. 15 what we suppose to be an olive grove, where the tree-trunks lean about, and stretch their old bare branches hither and thither, and cast long shadows on the sward, with a perfect understanding of

FIG. 15.—AN OLIVE GROVE, POMPEIAN COLLECTION.

pictorial effect. This becomes less surprising when the exquisite grace of some leafage used in decoration is noticed. One example—No. 234 in the Naples Museum—cannot be excelled in loveliness; it is probably maple, and the curling of the leaf blown aside by the wind, so as to show its pale outer side, the alternation of light and shade, and the skilful disposition of the masses, are of the highest art quality. (Fig. 16.) Now those who could so paint a branch would not fail in a tree.

They did not manage rocks so well. These are often curiously anticipative of much mediæval art, though in some instances greatly

superior. For a specimen of the latter we may refer again to Fig. 14, where in perfectly natural forms they compose a romantic scene. Better still is the example (Fig. 17) from one of the recently-excavated houses in Pompeii, where, with the distant sea, and the young trees and bushes springing out of the crags, and throwing their delicate foliage into the pale blue sky, which deepens towards



FIG. 16.—LEAF DECORATION, FROM POMPEII.

FIG. 17.—ROCKY COAST SCENE, POMPEII.

the zenith, we have almost as picturesque a bit of coast as modern art could produce. Other specimens of Pompeian rocks, such as those surrounding the olive grove (Fig. 15), are unsatisfactory in their lumpish rounded forms; but something of this may have been suggested by the small volcanic island of Revigliano, lying off the coast, a strange exception to the surrounding beauty, and which may therefore indeed only date from the day when Pompeii

ceased to be. But it would be interesting to know whence came the cromlech in that picture.

For we are continually reminded of local scenery. The cypress is frequently given. In Fig. 18 it casts its shadow against a vineyard wall as it does to-day in the vineyard tracks around Campanian villages. It is difficult, however, to account for the absence of the stone pine, which could have been no stranger to the landscape, since the kernels are actually found amongst the kitchen stores at Herculaneum and Pompeii. This is the more extraordinary because the palm is a favourite, but, as in later art, this may have been due to a fancy in patrons for the rare and odd. It is not surprising that in the whole of this Pompeian art the sea is a constant feature. It is always smooth and soft in its tints of blue; a mountain form like that of Ischia often rises from its distant horizon; while the waters near at hand are diversified with various craft, and quays, moles, towers, villas, temples, are spread along the shore. All this speaks of the famous bay on the shores of which the Campanians spent their easy lives. Hills again, if not mountains, are frequent, swelling softly against the sky. In one scene, found at Herculaneum, a small white cottage is perched on a hillside, and beyond it three hills rise one behind the other, their tints gradated according to distance. In form and tone these are much like what we find in Masaccio. Country scenes and incidents, associated, as at this day, with the rural shrine, abound, and for the walls of bath-rooms what we might call park scenes or at least ornamental shrubbery. There was something puerile in the attempt to imitate a landscape as seen through a window, and it shows, as does much else, the fancy of a decorator, or, shall we say, of the scene-painter with his tricks of illusion? Walls of gardens were so painted as to delude the eye into supposing an extent of scenery beyond. The excellence of this Pompeian work lies in detail and not in conception; if there is landscape for landscape's sake, it is not sought for any of its higher qualities, yet we must remember that the attempt at illusion brought an attempt at real landscape.

Occasionally we find something that suggests poetical feeling, as in



FIG. 18.—CYPRESS,  
POMPEII.

one of the Herculaneum subjects, where goats repose under trees and a purple mountain soars in the distance among red-tinted evening clouds ; but this is rare. Clouds are not often introduced at all, and never other than in large, serene, streaky masses ; seldom anything more than the pure blue of the sky, softly gradated, is attempted. Special effects and solemn moments in nature would have required more of the landscape painter's feeling than we can accord to these clever craftsmen who do not go beyond the picturesque, and for the most part insert their landscape to adorn legendary story. In one of these the subject is "Perseus and Medusa," and such legends did sometimes lead to the introduction of wild nature almost in the manner of that Salvator who came in after ages to these fair shores. More often this tendency to the romantic is found in illustrations of the *Odyssey*, already mentioned as favourite subjects in Greek decoration. That famous tale of a wanderer had evidently taken strong hold of the classical imagination, and we shall yet have to speak of a remarkable instance of its use in ancient art. Wild nature, too, sometimes comes in, when the forlorn deserts where savage creatures roam or pursue their prey are pictured ; there is more of this perhaps at Rome, and we should judge it to be eminently a Roman characteristic to like to see the animals of the amphitheatre in their natural surroundings. And we may mention here a small and coarse mosaic, from Pompeii, in the British Museum, in which, though nothing can be said for the rocks in the foreground, from which a lion springs, the green hills beyond, backed by a range of blue, show a decided appreciation of the delights of an open rolling country, and form a piece of true pictorial landscape such as we look for in vain among the mosaics of the Christian time. As a rule, however, it is pleasant habitable scenery that is preferred for decoration, telling of the time when the Italian people, all the world their own, dwelt at ease amidst fields and groves and vineyards, and along the sunny strands of their own Italy, busy with nets and boats, enjoying the cheerful scene.

We have said that the simple landscape of an after-time, like that of Masaccio, is sometimes suggested in these works ; but a still more significant fact about them is the free, juicy, spirited touch which marks the execution of the slighter sketches. This, in the figures, is accompanied by a boldness and breadth in the light and shade which calls to mind such late art as Canaletto's and Guardi's. "Touch" may be of small moment among greater things, but it is

an unmistakable indication of an experienced hand. Were these slight things, then, the work of real artists? We have called them "craftsmen," but have already, we think, pointed to the solution of the puzzle by suggesting scene-painters! Here surely do we encounter the successors of Agatharchos, accustomed to the rapid and effective work of the stage, who could dash in buildings and appropriate figures so as to catch the eye at a distance—illusionists of the stage, who undertook the illusion of a scene through a window; and here, too, we find the faults of the scene-painter, with his high horizon, his curious multiplication of objects, and his faulty perspective, sufficient for the stage, with its several points of view, but not sufficient for the picture. Landscape thus far, we believe, had not advanced much beyond the style of the post-Alexandrian painters, so well described by Vitruvius; probably it had not advanced far beyond the best work of Agatharchos.<sup>1</sup>

We must now examine what ruin has spared at Rome. Pliny, it will be remembered, spoke of "the imaginary landscape of a first-rate artist"; the question arises whether he here refers to wall-painting, since first-rate artists, it may be supposed, would spend their time rather upon panel-painting, leaving the wall to those decorators of whom we have spoken. Nor does the way in which Pliny makes mention of Ludius, a wall-painter of the time of Augustus, lead one to think that he regarded such mural work, however "delightful," as belonging to "first-rate art." "Ludius," he says (we quote Professor Colvin's translation), "was the first to bring in a singularly delightful fashion of wall-painting; villas, colonnades, examples of landscape-gardening, woods and sacred groves, reservoirs, straits, rivers, coasts,—all according to the heart's desire; and amidst them passengers of all kinds, on foot, in boats, driving in carriages or riding on asses, to visit their country properties; furthermore fishermen, bird-catchers, hunters, vintagers; or again he exhibits stately villas, to which the approach is through a swamp, with men staggering under the weight of the frightened women whom they have bargained to carry on their shoulders; and many another excellent and entertaining device of the same kind. The same artist also set the fashion of painting views, and that wonderfully cheap, of seaside towns in broad daylight." This passage, which certainly describes a style of decoration comprising more

<sup>1</sup> The absence in these paintings of the familiar form of Vesuvius has been remarked, but it assumed its present shape after the destruction of Pompeii.

of entertaining device than of landscape, and also particularly "cheap," could not surely have been "first-rate" in Pliny's opinion. But it lands us in more than one perplexity. The description answers almost word for word to what Vitruvius writes of as having been practised by the "ancients," meaning the Greeks of the post-Alexandrian period, and it also answers to a great deal of the Pompeian painting. Pliny must have been ignorant that Ludius was indebted to this Greek art for what he introduced at Rome, and which was probably transported to Pompeii by the wealthy Romans who took up their residences in that city.

But further, art of a very different character, and which may truly be called first-rate, has been attributed to this Ludius. We shall find it in the lonely villa of Livia, the wife of Augustus, at Prima Porta, seven miles from Rome, among the hills of the Campagna, and not far from that solitary building crowning a ridge across the Tiber, which some say once belonged to Gaspar Poussin. Descending into the chief guest-chamber of this imperial lady, a marvellous spectacle is disclosed. A forest, it may be called, of trees, chiefly ornamental—oleanders, cherry, orange<sup>1</sup> (or something like it), apple, pomegranate, all richly fruited, and mixed with young oak, maple, fir, cypress, and palm trees—cover the four walls, rising as from behind a low trellis and branching into blue sky. Birds flutter among the branches or perch upon their nests, and nothing can exceed the grace, variety, and freedom of the interlacing, thickly-foliaged boughs; while the whole is painted with a vigour, precision, a glow of colour, and a clever cast of light and shade, which are simply amazing; there is nothing like it at Pompeii, and here most certainly it is not the scene-painter with whom we have to do, but the finished artist. One cannot, indeed, call this exactly a landscape, since it consists only of near trees, but there is landscape power in abundance so far as woodland foreground goes; and one asks, Can this be by that Ludius whose achievements seem to have included so much that was trivial or simply humorous? Whoever painted it, one sighs to think of what he might have done, or may have actually done, in the way of true landscape which is lost to us. Fig. 19, a sketch from a single tree, shows something of the picturesque freedom which pervades the whole.

This fine work, it will be observed, as it is not properly a landscape, is not properly a picture, and that not only because it is

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Woermann believes the fruit to represent the medicinal apples of the Hesperides.

· wall-decoration but because it professes illusion; it is intended to produce the effect of a real garden upon the spectator, and so far is allied to the work of the stage, though of a far higher order. There is a good deal of this park or garden scenery in classic wall-painting,

FIG. 19.—TREE FROM LIVIA'S VILLA.

though nothing remains to us equal to that of Livia's Villa. In the tomb of a Greek family named Patron, in the Vigna Sassi, there is a similar, but much inferior, park-like scene, the purpose of which is explained in a touching inscription, of which we may quote a part:—



“ Nor thorns nor briars round my grave shall grow,  
Nor night birds scream around my place of rest ;  
But graceful trees shall there, encircling, spread  
Their tender leaves, and boughs well-fruited bend.  
There shall the nightingale's clear plaint be heard,  
And the cicada sing——”

This idea is exactly repeated in the painting, even to the cicada sitting amongst the branches ; here legend and picture together undoubtedly present to us the chief elements of classic delight in landscape.

In the so-called “ Second Tomb ” on the Via Latina there was apparently more of true landscape. Only a bit of blue sky and a few outlines now remain, but judging from an engraving, it once showed bald mountain tops, a few scattered trees, and a waterfall, with wild beasts roaming in the foreground. Eight small scenes in another chamber are made up of the usual objects—houses, temples, pillars, shrines, colonnades, trees, water, and boats. We can only say of such things that, as in Chinese art, they make but a toy landscape ; there is no real nature, or love of nature, in these crowded scenes, which occupy so large a place in Roman as in Pompeian art. Some forty landscapes among the decorations of the Columbarium at the Villa Pamfili are of this kind. Those which ornament the house of Livia, called also the house of Germanicus, on the Palatine, nearly destroyed as they are, were probably no better as to intention, if even not more fantastic, though Dr. Woermann found in them some excellent work ; and one view is redeemed from puerility inasmuch as it represents an actual Roman street. With such work answering very much to that which Ludius is said to have introduced, we must also class the fading idyllic landscape preserved at the Villa Albani. We will refer to one more only, a once famous specimen.

In 1676 there existed at Palestrina a wall-painting, since perished, of which an engraving and description were published at that date by Holstenius, from a copy made by Bartoli, whose entire faithfulness is unfortunately to be doubted. Holstenius supposed that it represented a Nymphæum, “ a place sacred to the water-deities.” (Fig. 20.) Dr. Woermann calls it “ a large and interesting landscape ” ; but, judging from this engraving, it should rather be regarded as a fanciful piece of rock-work—arch upon arch, with small temples, shrines, and houses perched up and down, and cascades pouring from various fissures into an artificial-looking lake,

upon the edge of which six goats are browsing. There seems to have been some character about the rocks in detail, and some picturesqueness in the trees, one or two of them being bare stems, as is often seen in Pompeian art. The trees and the rock detail are, however, precisely the points in which Dr. Woermann, not perhaps bearing sufficiently in mind examples at Pompeii, apprehends the interference of Bartoli. Beyond this picturesque freedom there is no proper landscape feeling, yet we must notice one curious hint of the pathetic, in the introduction of a broken fragment of a

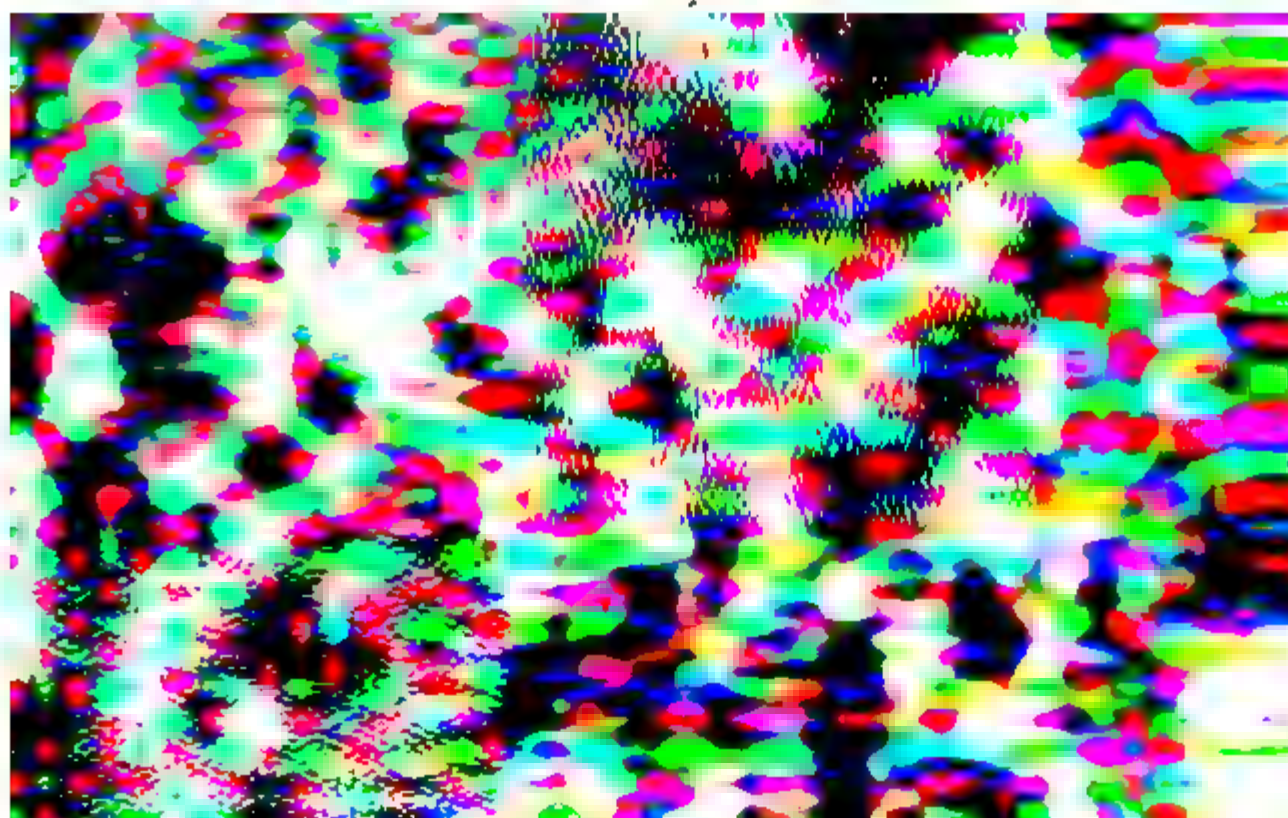


FIG. 20.—THE PALESTRINA NYMPHÆUM.

fluted column, and must needs ask, Had, then, the charm of classic ruins already disclosed itself to Roman art? or is it an addition of Bartoli? Another singular item, a cromlech stone, is rescued from suspicion by its occurrence in the Pompeian view of an olive grove. (Fig. 15.) Woermann speaks of a "village" on the crags to the right; it is certainly no village, but only two or three ornamental-looking buildings, and the mistake reminds us how much of an anachronism such a thing would have been. Although a favourite subject in modern art, no genuine village-crested height, so far as we remember, is seen in any antique picture. We may gather a good deal from this lack; something may be due to changes in social condition, and consequently in the outward appearance of

things, more perhaps to the taste of ancient "society" for what was gay, luxurious, lively, and "religious"; and to a want of sympathy with the "common people," though to gain amusement out of them and their occupations was another thing; of a certain poetical side of husbandry, the Roman proprietor and man of letters had, as we well know, sufficient apprehension.

What, however, we would chiefly draw attention to is the essentially theatrical character of this noted wall-piece, which surely sprang from the ready hands of those artists who were in the habit of piling up rock and temple, and every sort of "property" to compose a taking "scene."

But amidst all this profusion of work bordering upon landscape, and often charming in its details, to be found in the remains, or recorded in engravings of Roman mural-painting, one series of pictures remains to us, and only one, to which the term "landscape" can properly be applied, because they alone are scenes of nature complete in themselves, and rendered with something of poetical conception.

There are six of these unique pictures, besides portions of two others. They were found on the Esquiline in 1848, and are now preserved in the Vatican; it is in them that we again come across those "*Odyssey* subjects" of which we have already spoken. We have called them landscapes complete in themselves, but in fact they formed part of a running decoration, continuous, but for painted pilasters which occur at certain distances, about a yard and a half apart, and which are each supposed to hide so much as they cover of the one great composition, so that we still recognise the idea of illusion,—that is, of representing scenery visible at the openings between pilasters, nevertheless each is a sufficiently separate scene, to be called a picture; the first three represent the adventures of Ulysses upon the coast of the Læstrigonians; two, the events that follow on the island of Circe; and the last, the interview of the chief with the Shades of the under-world.

What first strikes us is the rich harmonious colour; there is nothing crude, harsh, or gay, but great depth of tone, and a thorough sense of gradation both in colour and light and shade. The distances are broad, cool, and dim; the foregrounds sharply touched, warm, and bright. The light is throughout well managed, so as to produce a unity of effect in each subject. There is very little foliage; what there is, is touched in with great freedom,

and the two trees that stand chiefly out to view resemble, in their long bare stems and forked branching, a great deal of ancient art, as well as (singular to say) much that was subsequent in Christian art, though after a long interval. In the first picture, a tree on the top of the yellow crags of the bay is half blown down, as if by gales from the sea, and shows something of the same feeling that Salvator embodied in many a weird and worn trunk. The execution is everywhere slight and sketchy, again reminding us of the scene-painter's art. The figures are small and poor, without the vigorous effective touch we have noticed in Pompeian art. There is very little detail anywhere, though some of the hills and crags are given in a broad style, with much truth to nature; yet here also not comparable in precision to the little subject at Pompeii. (Fig. 17.)

The chief merit of these pictures consists in the sentiment they convey. The poem lands its hero upon strange unvisited shores, and besides being true to whatever description is given, these illustrations carry out that thought. There is the idea of a solitary sea-coast—here with its turfy and contorted cliffs, and sedgy bottoms; there with low sandy dunes, or solemn headlands; and continually those glimpses of the wide sea that a wanderer on such shores finds at every turn. The sea horizon, with one exception, where it is lost in the murk of a retreating storm, lies calm and defined against the far light of the sky. The subjects containing the interview with the ghosts is much praised by Woermann for its poetical rendering, and especially for the ray of light that penetrates the gloom. This praise seems to us scarcely justified. The unimposing arch of cliff under which Ulysses seeks the awful dead, looks only like one of those accidental freaks to be found among weather-worn crags. The details are specially poor, and the light is not a striking feature. A very odd addition in all the subjects consists in the personifications—the presiding genii—that recline by the side of stream or fount, meadow or coast, always supremely indifferent to the concerns of the human figures. These are curiously inconsistent with our notions of a landscape, but they are appropriate to a poem in which the supernatural is always at hand. That the names of these and other personages should be written above their heads is a curious confession of the inadequacy of art, or it may imply a custom too ancient to be departed from.

These pictures, in default of better, are certainly of great interest.



We have noticed the indications that they were executed by the scene-painting class of artists, and in workmanship they cannot compare for a moment with the Livia garden; but they are genuine landscape illustrations of a poem, and are free from the fantastic assortment of objects which spoils so much of this landscape work. It is noticeable, however, that it is the old, old poem that is illustrated, and not any effort of current literature. Throughout these wall-pictures there is plenty of mythologic legend and of Homeric story, but the poets of the day find no illustrator. There is nothing, for instance, that we can recognise as taken from the Theocritan pastoral poetry. The inference suggested is, that these wall-painters followed only accepted ancient models for their art, and were rather professional decorators than artists of independent genius, though the Prima Porta painting, and perhaps the *Odyssey* pictures seem to show that genius and efficiency might sometimes be had.

There are, or have been, various mosaics about Rome, in which landscape appears, but it generally tends more towards the map than the view. Especially is this the case with the great Egyptian scene preserved at Palestrina. The "Guattani" mosaic, however, with its view of a lonely lake, and a mountain at sunrise, offers a notable exception.<sup>1</sup> In the mosaics from Hadrian's villa at Tivoli, now in the Vatican, the trees and rocks are thoroughly archaic and unreal.

To come to a general conclusion upon the only remains we possess of classic pictorial art: It is clear there was an enormous amount of landscape material. It was freely used as background to the figure-subjects of mythologic legend, and it was still more in use, either in the way of illusion or in connection with lively scenes of social life. In all this the sense of the picturesque in detail is remarkable, much more than could be expected from contemporary literature, and the style of execution is free and spirited to an astonishing degree, and sometimes, as in the Prima Porta Villa, of first-rate quality; most of it, however, shows traces only of that sort of ability which belongs to the painter for the stage. How far there existed anything beyond this facility and picturesqueness it is difficult from lack of material to say, the six *Odyssey* subjects supplying almost our only means of judging. From these we should conclude that, with more feeling for the larger aspects of nature

<sup>1</sup> The writer relies here upon the description given by Dr. Woermann, regretting that he has not seen the mosaic alluded to.

than might have been expected, there still was nothing comparable to the noble works in architecture, sculpture, and probably in figure-painting, which distinguished the great classic period even in its decline. The spirit of nature in her finer moods, the play of light and shade, and colour, the witchery of cloud-effects, the pathos of evenings and mornings, of springtides and autumns,—to apprehend all this, and to give it pictorial expression, was reserved for the art of the modern world.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE LANDSCAPE OF EARLY CHRISTIAN MOSAICS.

LANDSCAPE—The Catacombs. CHURCH MOSAICS :—Ravenna—Rome.

WHEN everything went to wreck in classic civilisation, art did not escape ; and though amidst the woes and throes of that dissolution, a Christian art did slowly and solemnly build itself up out of the great verities of the faith, that also partook of the vast "decline and fall," perishing at last with the decay of all art-power.

Christian art at first, and in the ancient methods of wall-painting, embodied some sweet and simple thoughts. It was sepulchral, but very different in intention from, though necessarily adopting the forms of, the pagan art around. There was no trace of its having been devised for the delectation of the mournful ghost in his house of darkness. It expressed, on the contrary, hope in immortal life, and the consolation of bereaved survivors. The "Good Shepherd"—a tree on either hand, saplings only the height of Himself—carried the lamb on His shoulders. Moses was shown striking with his staff the rock of the wilderness, sometimes with such truth to nature that his shadow falls upon the rock. Noah was seen afloat upon the waters, or Jonah cast upon a rocky shore.

In all this the art, of the utmost simplicity in design, shows a grace and feeling for nature entirely classic ; sometimes, indeed, the subject itself is classic with a Christian meaning, as in the *Orpheus* in the centre panel of the ceiling in the cemetery of Domitilla. Here, alternating with Old Testament incidents, some small compartments are given to bits of pure landscape, in which the trees are simple and natural, a clear inheritance from pagan art. We may refer also to a subject in the Lateran collection, where a tree (Fig. 21) has the same character. In that collection, too, there is in one instance the suggestion of a range of mountains and a lake ; some have even

supposed perspective, that great element in landscape as well as pictorial effect, to be more evident in the early Christian than in the preceding pagan art; but this, in view of the now established excellence of that art, cannot be accepted. On the contrary, there is the appearance of slightness, not to say feebleness, as well as incongruity in these touching underground mementoes. Christian art was not to develop in this direction. The imposing topics of Apocalyptic vision took more and more possession of Christian thought, and the walls of great churches afforded the necessary space.

This change finds expression, as we come to the fifth century, in the stiff splendours of church mosaic—splendours indicative not only of decline in art, but also of a change from the simplicity and pathos of early Christian feeling. Well might Chrysostom warn against the “glittering buildings” which seduce the heart.<sup>1</sup> In this gorgeous material the style of representation is for the most part ruled by conceptions of the supernal majesty of the Christ—His royal court of prophets, apostles, and martyrs, His mystical relation to the Church, the awe of the judgment-throne. Still, favoured by the surviving spirit of allegory, scenes of earth are not forgotten, and though mosaic offers an unhappy material for landscape, it was attempted, and in the “Galla Placidia” Mausoleum at Ravenna, dating from 440 A.D., there is enough to cause eminent authorities to say that “the Christ is seated upon a rock in a broken hilly landscape lighted from a blue sky.”<sup>2</sup> This is rather misleading. Green hillocks with tufts of herbage, or possibly trees of no recognisable type in nature, and quarry-like blocks of stone, make a very poor “landscape”; nor does any “light” fall upon it as in a natural scene; while the sheep surrounding the Good Shepherd are strange creatures with bird-like heads and feather-like wool. There is, indeed, greater dignity in the principal figure than in the catacomb representations, as well as a certain solemnity in the scene so far in favour of the later Christian feeling, and which forecasts a different reading of nature from the classical; but the art at hand to express this was far gone in decline, and already a barbaric element obtains to the destruction of beauty, though it is not without a certain strength.

In Sta. Maria Maggiore at Rome the mosaic pictures in the

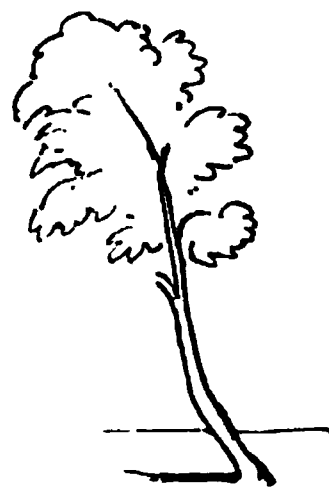


FIG. 21.—TREE IN THE  
LATERAN COLLECTION.

<sup>1</sup> See chap. iii. p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Crowe and Cavalcaselle, i. 23.



nave, supposed to be of about the same date as the preceding—the middle of the fifth century—show much more, and better executed landscape; but this is because the classical element, better preserved at Rome, prevails. The subjects are all taken from Old Testament



FIG. 22.—MOSAICS, STA. MARIA MAGGIORE, ROME.

history, and trees and hills are given with noticeable freedom. (Fig. 22.) We have, however, to remember the possible interference of a restorer, and that some subjects have been altogether renewed. Nearly a century afterwards, about 530 A.D., in SS. Cosmo e Damiano,

where the Christ appears with a grandeur of conception as much beyond the range of Roman art as the execution falls below it, the sacred river is rendered by undulating stripes of blue and white to indicate a ripple; and rocky fragments spread about on the green shore are broken in a way that shows close observation of actual shapes. (Fig. 23.) They are richly and variously coloured, flowers and herbage cluster about

FIG. 23.—FRAGMENT OF ROCK, SS. COSMO E DAMIANO, ROME.

them, and their shadows are truly cast. Here there was certainly a notion of the picturesque, though not beyond that of classic art. It is the same with the small trees on the frieze below, where the twelve sheep accompany "the Lamb."

In the same century, but a little later—about 540 A.D.—we have at S. Vitale in Ravenna (under the Exarchate, and Byzantine influence) landscape on a large scale. The occasion is the history

of the Old Covenant, and the description by Kugler of the background as "in many parts elevated in a very remarkable manner, consisting of steep steps of rock covered with verdure—an evident attempt to imitate the forms of reality," is fairly justified. The most interesting object, however, for us is the tree which stands before Abraham's dwelling in the scene where he entertains the angels. (Fig. 24.)



FIG. 24.—TREE AT S. VITALE, RAVENNA.

So far as the trunk goes, there is undeniable study of nature, and the boughs spread themselves gracefully above; but the foliage is composed (like that of Greek sculpture) of large single leaves, similar to those of the sweet chestnut, showing, along with a certain faithfulness to nature, great lack of the power to generalise; the classic freedom of foliage is gone.<sup>1</sup> Yet in several particulars this landscape redeems the age of decadence.

The mosaics of S. Apollinare Nuovo, also of the sixth century (553-566 A.D.), are more impressive than any others in Ravenna,

<sup>1</sup> In Kugler it is described as "a leafless but budding tree." His informant cannot have examined it with a glass.

but the palm-trees which alternate with the noble martyr figures, are no test of landscape power—that formal tree serves only as an appro-



FIG. 25.—TREES FROM S. APOLLINARE NUOVO, RAVENNA.



FIG. 26.—TREE AND ROCK FRAGMENTS, S. APOLLINARE IN CLASSE,

prate decorative adjunct. But in the series of small mosaics above the windows,—very difficult to see, but deserving more attention, we think, than they have hitherto received, since in simplicity and graphic power they compare not disadvantageously with Giotto's frescos at Padua,—in these mosaics, landscape is occasionally introduced, and, in comparison with Giotto, shows in the trees much more of the freedom of nature than the great mediæval painter could attain. (Fig. 25.)



FIG. 27.—ROCK IN THE BAPTISTERY OF STA. MARIA IN COSMEDIN, RAVENNA.

Coming to S. Apollinare in Classe, the church forlornly standing between the marsh and the wood, three miles from Ravenna, we pass over, according to some authorities, more than a hundred years, reaching so late a date as 671 - 677.

Whether that be so or not, we find, in this last monument of the Exarchate, only continued degeneracy, because classic art was

expiring, and Christian art had no life of its own. In the mosaics of this church it is interesting to compare the tree (Fig. 26) with the specimens already described. The result shows feebler power of design, and a decided approach towards the conventional forms that stand for trees in succeeding centuries of moribund art. Fragments of rock (Fig. 26) as in SS. Cosmo e Damiano are spread over a green meadow, but they are not so artistic as in that fine mosaic. Rock was indeed and for long afterwards a stone of stumbling and of offence in art. Although fairly rendered in some Roman work it fell, in the hands of the Christian mosaists, into shapes of hopeless imbecility, from which it did not emerge for centuries. A specimen from the baptistery of S. Maria in Cosmedin at Ravenna (Fig. 27) very curiously anticipates the rock of eight hundred years later, as rendered after a long course of manuscript art by Fra Angelico.

It remains to notice the place assigned to clouds in these ancient mosaics, and the manner of their execution. Clouds in art were distinctively a Christian characteristic. Pagan art, as we have seen, dealt very sparingly and always very slightly with clouds. But the record of the cloud of the Transfiguration, of the cloud that received the ascending Lord, more than all the prophetic word, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him," had deeply impressed the imagination of the early Church, and drew special attention to those mysterious phenomena of the heavens. But how to render such soft and filmy objects in mosaic was a difficulty.



FIG. 28.—CLOUDS AT S. MARIA MAGGIORE, ROME.

In about the earliest landscape in this material that we have noticed, that of S. Maria Maggiore at Rome (Fig. 28), there is some attempt to give the varied form, peaceful intermingling, and tender colouring of evening clouds; they are tinted alternately crimson and blue.

At SS. Cosmo e Damiano the same thing is attempted in a different way (Fig. 29); in this mosaic, golden-edged clouds interlace

with considerable freedom and variety. But in both cases the material shows its inherent intractability. In the first there is the tape-like look of seaweed, in the second the hardness and fracture of slabs of stone, and like the loose slabs of a pavement too, they are

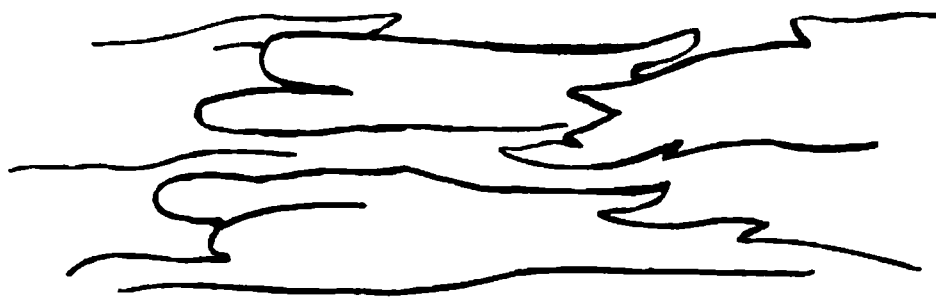


FIG. 29.—CLOUDS AT SS. COSMO E DAMIANO, ROME.

placed round the figure of the Lord with no idea of volume or grandeur. By far the most imaginative in idea and successful in execution, though small and unimportant in itself, is some cumulus cloud (Fig. 30) among the mosaics of S. Vitale at Ravenna; it seems to be swelling before a gentle wind, and the shadowing of the rounded masses is really delicately done. In S. Apollinare in Classe the thin fish-like flakes of evening cloud are fairly imitated, but, like those of SS. Cosmo e Damiano, they are sprinkled over the



FIG. 30.—CUMULUS CLOUD AT S. VITALE, RAVENNA.

surface, without any symptom of mutual relation. (Fig. 31.) The poorest of all are in S. Prassede at Rome, where formal fishlike shapes, without the least variation, are ranged in threes with an absurd alternation of red and blue (Fig. 32); but then S. Prassede is of the time when art was well-nigh dead, as the tree, thoroughly conventional, bears witness. Already every suggestion of landscape

had disappeared in most monumental art, for the sacred figures, as in those of S. Agnese at Rome, seventh century, are seen blocked in upon blazing gold and standing upon nothing at all !

Italy was ruined by invasions. Byzantium, though free from that scourge, was yet powerless to save the art handed to her by

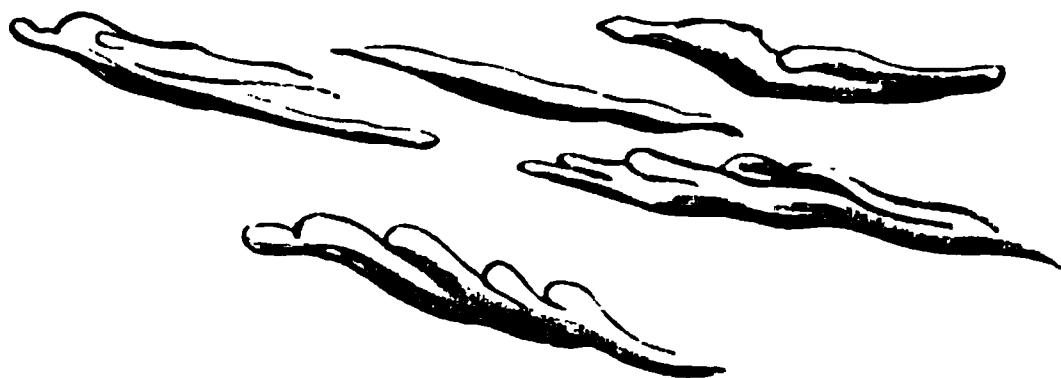


FIG. 31.—EVENING CLOUDS, S. APOLLINARE IN CLASSE, RAVENNA.

classic tradition. This was mainly owing to the ecclesiastical canons imposed in the Eastern Church. By the second Council of Nicæa (787 A.D.) it was ordained that "the art is the painter's, but the composition and the disposition are the holy father's." It was this Council that determined the symbols which lasted in the Western Church, with some modifications, till the time of the Renaissance, and which are even now in use in Russo-Greek work. Such trammels were fatal to art, though a certain dignity in figures was for a time



FIG. 32.—CLOUDS AND TREE AT S. PRASEDE, ROME.

preserved. We may perhaps discover some reviving feeling for natural objects, when, during the iconoclastic schism, figures being banished, an ornamentation was resorted to in which plants and birds are the chief motive ; and it may be remarked, too, that in little more than a century, with the re-introduction of figures, there was a slight revival of classicism, of which manuscripts afford some instances, but by the eleventh century the ecclesiastical compulsion

to repeat certain forms with mechanical exactness had completed the ruin. This is that art to which the term Byzantine will always be applied as a reproach, and from which every lover of art must needs shrink with disgust. Night had come, and with it ghosts and horrors.

In now looking back for a moment upon the closing hours of the classic day, it appears as if Christian ideas had, in giving a new theme to art, imparted some temporary life. They had bestowed a new type of sublimity in the enthroned Lord of angels and of men,—a grander sphere in visions of the unseen world,—and through the symbolic use of the sacred history a thoroughly picturesque field for art; but we find, too, that nothing could resist the palsy of the ages and the rigour of ecclesiastical tradition. As regards landscape we may note two distinct phases. First there is that of the catacombs, very slight, but graceful with the grace of classic art. Later—under an extraordinary development of church mosaic and its application to elaborate Scripture allegory—a peculiar landscape, chiefly of rock and verdure, associated with a strong feeling for colour, and often displayed in subjects of a large size; a landscape not without some genuine elements and seeming promise, but a promise which utterly died away.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE LANDSCAPE OF MANUSCRIPTS.

LANDSCAPE OF MANUSCRIPTS :—Italian—Byzantine—Irish—Age of Charlemagne—Gothic vulgate of the ninth century—Origin of Diaper—Influence of glass painting—Awakening in the thirteenth century—French manuscripts—Netherland manuscripts—Disappearance of Diaper—The landscape of various manuscripts—Illustrations to the poems of Christina of Pisa—The Bedford Missal—*Book of Hours* by Gerhard Hoornbach—*Thesaurus Historiarum*—Influence of manuscript-art upon landscape.

IT is among rolls of manuscripts and the pages of books of devotion that, during many centuries, we have to seek the traces of pictorial art and of whatever of landscape might survive. Here, in the art of the illuminator, was the opportunity for constant practice with the brush, for the use of bright colours, for minute and delicate finish. This was worth something even amidst the utter decay of art, and the value of such materials and processes was great when a revival of landscape took place. At present we can only follow the course of its melancholy decline towards absolute extinction.

Although the art of the miniaturist, or illustrator of books, is very ancient, no specimens remain of earlier date than the fourth or fifth century; these belong to MSS. of the *Iliad*, and of the *Bucolics*, *Georgics*, and *Æneid* of Virgil; as might be expected, they are entirely classical in style, and what little landscape they contain is of the simple kind, with which we are already familiar. Messrs. Woltmann and Woermann speak of the fifty-eight illustrations of the *Iliad*, preserved in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, as containing "compositions, feebly distributed amongst landscape backgrounds, which are often wide and scattered;"<sup>1</sup> but at least trees are given with freedom in stem, branch, and foliage, houses are in fair perspective, and the distant level line of the sea is brought in effectively. The execution of these, and of the Virgilian miniatures, is in broad

<sup>1</sup> *History of Painting*, i. 101.



and simple body-colour. In the parchment roll at the Vatican, containing scenes from the Book of Joshua, of later but uncertain date, the method is much that of the Pompeian paintings, light and sketchy, and the antique practice of symbolising mountains, rivers, cities by human figures, supersedes landscape, although in one case, above a female figure personifying the city of Gibeon, there is an actual view of a town.

All these miniatures were probably Italian, and copies of earlier works. But Byzantium became the chief source of such luxuries for the wealthy, producing costly books in the shape of illuminated gospels, psalters, and bibles; for this art, in the hands of monks, naturally became almost exclusively religious.

In these miniatures, partly from the surviving practice of personification, there are at first but few indications of landscape. Still there are some, and of the illuminations to a fragment of the Book

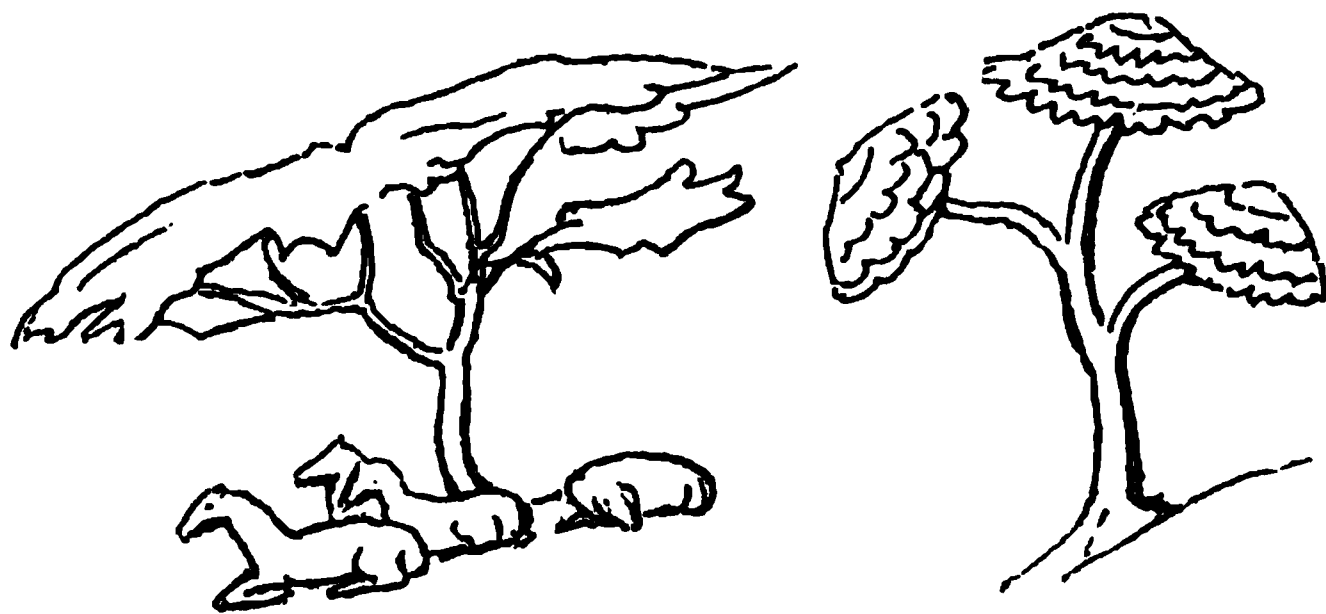


FIG. 33.—TREES FROM BOOK OF GENESIS, VIENNA.

of Genesis—Greek, of the fifth century, and now at Vienna—we are told that “the trees still show some feeling for nature.”<sup>1</sup> Judging from the engravings in “Garrucci” this description would scarcely apply to more than one tree, the semblance of a cedar, as it seems to be, with sheep reposing beneath its spreading branches (Fig. 33.) It is from the history of Joseph. In the *Paradise* the trees are simply single stems, to which are appended at regular intervals single large leaves and apples. The vine, too, that bends over the heads of Noah and his family, is composed of long thin stems, with here and there a leaf, here and there a bunch. The thin stem is appropriate, and there is some ideal gracefulness in all these attempts at nature, but it is quite absent in a specimen of a tree

<sup>1</sup> Woltmann and Woermann, *History of Painting*, p. 190.

(Fig. 33) made up of parasols, and probably by a different hand which had lost the classic tradition. Rocks are of that steplike sort which pervades centuries of art (Fig. 34), for we may trace the same character in the frescoes by Lorenzetti at Pisa. Mountains are rather better treated. In the fragments of a Book of Genesis, in the British Museum, of the same fifth century, there are suggestions, so far as its half-burnt condition allows one to judge, of landscape purely Pompeian, as is the broad bold artistic touch with which the faces are indicated.



FIG. 34.—STEP ROCKS.

Classicism was dying, but it had singular revivals, which generally brought back something of classic landscape. Such a revival took place at the close of the iconoclastic schism in 867 A.D., but while, in a MS. of Sermons by Gregory Nazianzen of this date (Paris), we have a dignified figure of Ezekiel, the rocks (Fig. 35) have already all the artificiality of the feeblest mediævalism.<sup>1</sup> Later, in a psalter of the ninth or tenth century (Paris, Bibliothèque), there is an extraordinary return to better work. Dr. Waagen speaks of a small but very delicately-treated landscape in the scene between David and Nathan; and in the first miniature of the series, engraved both by Lady Eastlake in her *History of our Lord*, and by Messrs. Woltmann and Woermann,<sup>2</sup> where the young David sits among his sheep, playing upon a lyre (Fig. 36), there is much of the free classic feeling in the foliage; some poplars are given with perfect naturalness, the rocks of the foreground are naturalistic to a degree rare even in the best classic work, and the sheep and goats

FIG. 35.—BYZANTINE  
ROCKS OF NINTH CENTURY.

<sup>1</sup> Engraved in Woltmann and Woermann, i. 224.

<sup>2</sup> Woltmann and Woermann, i. 225 (*Kunstwerke in Paris*, iii. 220-223). In this case I have not had an opportunity of consulting the original MS., and there are curious differences between Lady Eastlake's and Messrs. Woltmann and Woermann's engravings. I have followed more particularly the latter.

are far superior to those of the Ravenna mosaics. Yet more surprising is it that, according to Woltmann and Woermann in the *Sickness of Hezekiah*, from behind rocks and trees there "streams a tender red light."<sup>1</sup> Here truly is landscape yet alive; but it is only because classic feeling had not yet perished.

The eleventh century saw it all but gone. A Greek psalter, dated 1066 A.D. (19,352 Brit. Mus.), affords evidence enough of the fact. Look at trees figured thus (Fig. 37), and think of what lay hidden under the cinders of Vesuvius, or even among the slight effigies of the catacombs! There is, indeed, in the black leaning trunks, the hints of lopped branches, and the grasping roots, some attempt at nature, but it is of a poor conventional sort, which shows all its helplessness in the foliage; of perspective there is none, the objects stand all in a

FIG. 36.—GOATS AND ROCKS FROM  
MS. OF TENTH CENTURY.

row upon one plane, and the house is the oddest of painted boxes set up on end. In the figures alone may lurk some reminiscence of the early Christian style.

FIG. 37.—TREES IN A GREEK PSALTER, 1066 A.D.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Waagen (*Kunstwerke in Paris*, iii. 220-223), however, recognises a "red light" in *David slaying the Lion* and in the *Prophetess Anna*, where it occurs behind the mountains. We may doubt, therefore, the poetical intention suggested by the authors quoted.

Things are not so bad in a psalter dating from the middle of the twelfth century, which had belonged to Melisenda, wife of King Fulke of Jerusalem (Egerton, 1139 Brit. Mus.) The figures, indeed, float about upon a burnished gold surface; but in the *Transfiguration*, though the mountains are only molehills, the trees have at least the grace of flowering grasses. (Fig. 38.) But this MS. is admitted to be a very choice specimen, and may not be entirely of Byzantine origin. It may indicate the importance of the illuminator in the history of art that, as Dr. Waagen suggests, Cimabue in the *Entombment* at Assisi, and Duccio in the *Descent from the Cross* at Siena, adopted motives similar to those of this manuscript.<sup>1</sup>

In this psalter we find a *Crucifixion*, the subject so long avoided in Christian art. An example occurs, indeed, in a Syrian manuscript so early as the end of the sixth century; but in Byzantine miniatures the subject does not become common till the ninth, and then the symbolic method of treatment shown in the draped figure and painless attitude of the great sufferer, and especially in the curious way of representing the eclipse of sun and moon by means of human faces partly swathed in drapery,<sup>2</sup> prevents any association with landscape. Yet we cannot but regard with interest the introduction of a topic which eventually brought in such fine elements of natural scenery as the darkened sky, the towers of the guilty city, and the "mountains round about Jerusalem." At any rate, to deal with the crucifixion at all was a proof not only of the decline of classic feeling, but that deeper, more tragic powers than the art of paganism ever knew were entering upon the field—powers that would eventually have something to say in landscape.

We need not pursue further the fortunes of so effete an art as that of Byzantium. The Turkish conquest did not at once destroy it, but with the addition of foreign elements, among which in the

<sup>1</sup> Waagen's *Treasures of Art*, i. 101.

<sup>2</sup> Undoubtedly a heathen tradition of Apollo and Diana, the history of which in Christian art is very curious. The two heads—male and female—appear so late as the *Crucifixion* by Raphael at Lord Dudley's; and the tradition still survives in the Turkish badge of crescent and star.

FIG. 38.—TREES FROM THE MELISENDA MS.

sixteenth century was landscape of very fair character, it ceased to be distinctively Byzantine. We must now trace the origin of these foreign elements.

Manuscript illumination had long ere this fallen into the more vigorous hands of Celtic and Germanic races. A very peculiar style, having no connection with classic art, sprang up in Ireland as early as the sixth century. It was, in fact, elaborate ornamental penmanship, in forms derived in the first instance from those primitive combinations of plaits, knots, and chequer patterns which belonged to ancient needle-work, and were probably transmitted through Byzantine Oriental tradition; to this were added forms, such as spirals and nail-heads, familiar in metal-work; and the whole was arranged in geometrical figures. The addition of simple animal forms which lent themselves to the pen, and the construction of uncouth human figures and faces out of scrolls and flourishes, was the utmost that this singular art could accomplish, and evidently landscape was quite out of the question—even of leaf-ornament there is no sign. But the style afforded an excellent exercise in colour, which was inserted amongst the pen patterns, and, with a few simple tints, charming kaleidoscope effects, bright and harmonious, were obtained. The vulgarism of gold was never admitted, at least in the best time.

This Irish art flourished during the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries, and may have influenced to a certain extent the English till the tenth century, though in England from the first, Byzantine or early Christian models prevailed. So also with the Irish style practised on the Continent during these centuries, and which had its headquarters at St. Gallen. The infusion of Greek or antique art is seen in the introduction of leaf-patterns, and of a classic elegance in the combinations of animal forms with which initial letters were adorned; while, again, the human figure, instead of being a barbarous semblance in scroll work, was depicted with at least an art intention, and after early types. What concerns us is that nature, though under antique guidance, was beginning to afford a repertory for Western art.

In the great days of Charlemagne—the eighth century—and within the bounds of his great empire, miniature painting partook of the diffused energy of life, and retained it during those of his immediate successors. Now, along with gorgeous colouring and barbaric

gold and silver, we distinctly trace the influence of those classic models, both in figures and architecture, however badly rendered, which a "Roman" emperor would be likely to favour. Flowers, too, begin to bloom on the borders, and in some few backgrounds—as in the gospel book of Charlemagne preserved at Vienna—there are rude indications of landscape;<sup>1</sup> architectural forms richly coloured, but oddly put together, without knowledge of perspective, are, however, the usual resource.

In the ninth century Byzantine influence in the West, which still supplied technical skill and classic models, began to decline, and a marked coarseness ensues, which yet is not without a promising vigour. Pictured Bibles now abound, and a fresh and living force seems to take the place of that ecclesiastical tradition which was emasculating Byzantine art. In a large folio Vulgate (10,546 Brit. Mus.) of this century the figures are of the coarsest type—short, clumsy, and with mops of hair—but full of dramatic expression both in feature and action. Nor is this all. In the page which represents in successive bands the story of the Creation and the Fall we are struck with the appearance of an actual sky, composed of dull blue grays, gradated downwards towards a green and hillocky foreground, clumsily dabbed with brown, which gives standing to the figures. Since the classical times, it must be remembered, we have had no sky like this, nor does it occur again for perhaps three centuries. More remarkable still is the character of the trees, which on that single page are of seven or eight different sorts, and some of them eminently natural. It is startling to compare Fig. 39 with specimens of the later Byzantine (Fig. 37), and with the usual type of mediæval trees, as in Fig. 42. The tree of life, from which the greedy-looking pair are warned, is indeed of singular construction (Fig. 40), but the probable intention was to depict no real tree, but that whose "leaves should be for the healing of the nations." Dr. Waagen

FIG. 39.—TREE FROM A  
GOTHIC VULGATE OF THE  
NINTH CENTURY.

<sup>1</sup> Woltmann and Woermann, *History of Painting*, i. 210—"The sentiment is helped by the background, which consists mainly of landscape indicated in the simplest manner with rudely placed hills and trees."

describes the Mt. Sinai of this Bible as "throwing out flames in eight places"; the mountain is, however, but a shapeless reddish-tinted mound, or dust-heap, supporting the figure of Moses, who receives the law from a hand extended below the rim of a sort of drop-scene. A more interesting object is a fir tree at the side, really studied from nature; it is touched with gold, but otherwise is of a natural dark-green.

Yet, so far as landscape is concerned, this Vulgate appears to be exceptional. With the decadence of the Carlovingian empire, and the continued absence of technical knowledge, manuscript-art



FIG. 40.—TREE OF LIFE,  
GOTHIC VULGATE.

FIG. 41.—DESTRUCTION OF PHARAOH, AND A  
TWELFTH CENTURY TREE.

deteriorated, though not without indications here and there of dawning originality, as in a St. Gallen psalter of the ninth or tenth century, where horses, though coloured scarlet and green, are lively and natural in action; landscape, however, in the same picture is only represented by blades of grass springing from purple wave-like shapes. There is life also in the figures of a tenth-century manuscript of Lucan, from the same monastery, noticeable too as illustrating profane history; but here the landscape has disappeared under a revival of the old map treatment, a lapse which it is astonishing to find lasting into the twelfth century. In a French Bible at the Hague of that age the destruction of Pharaoh occurs in a sea composed of wavy lines, surrounding a gilded square of land, upon which Moses and his people are painted, while chariots set up on end indicate the submerged Egyptian host! In this miniature

may also be seen what a tree had come to look like (Fig. 41); still more debased is that of an Anglo-Norman MS. of the same century. (Fig. 42.)

The same absolute ignorance of perspective is shown in three German Gospels of the tenth century,<sup>1</sup> wherein, for instance, the illuminator had no other means of depicting the people who cast their clothes in the way of our Lord entering Jerusalem "than by placing them in a lower row, from whence they seem to be reaching upwards!"

But at this tenth-century period a new and singular foe to landscape appeared in Europe brought from the East. This was the imitation of patterns in Oriental stuffs, due to the arrival in Saxony of the Greek princess Theophano to be married to Otho II. The result of this imitation appears in the three Gospels just mentioned, where whole pages are covered with a decoration of the kind; also in the chessboard patterns of various backgrounds in a manuscript at Bamberg; "and still more in a 'Gospel' at Ratisbon, in which the pictures have completely the character of tapestry designs."<sup>2</sup> Oriental as these patterns were, the practice of covering backgrounds and vacant spaces of pictorial subjects with them does not appear to have prevailed in the manuscript-art of Byzantium itself, where, with all its feebleness, certain canons of art probably stood in the way. Nothing more was done than to surround the subject, generally itself composed of figures very small in size, with an elaborate border of the peculiar arabesque pattern which had come into vogue. The Westerns, however, already familiar with Irish pattern-work, seem to have eagerly adopted the idea when the rich tapestries of the East were offered to their gaze.

The introduction of this ornamentation in manuscript to the exclusion of a plain gold ground, of any kind of tinting, or of any attempt at landscape, was also helped by the prevalence of it in another and brilliant art, that of glass painting, which arose in the tenth century, whether first in France or Germany is doubtful. In



FIG. 42.—TREE OF THE SEPULCHRE, ANGLO-NORMAN, TWELFTH CENT.

<sup>1</sup> Elaborately described by Messrs. Woltmann and Woermann, *History of Painting*, pp. 265-269.

<sup>2</sup> Woltmann and Woermann, p. 271.



favour of the former is cited the statement of a twelfth-century writer that the French is the nation most skilled "in the rich variegation of windows"; for the second a letter of thanks from an abbot of Tegernsee (983-1001), in which he rejoices that "the golden sun has for the first time shone down upon the pavement of the church through painted panes of many colours."<sup>1</sup> However that may be, it cannot be doubted that dealing, as the illuminator did especially with colour, the new glory of the windows must have afforded him many a lesson, particularly in the skilful combination of powerful colours, in the use of neutral tints, and in the unity of effect necessary for a complete composition.

But it no less set him upon a track which led away from landscape. Curiously enough, the imitation of tapestries was in glass painting, the direct source of chequer or diaper work; for as walls were covered with these rich patterns in tapestry hangings, each window of painted glass was supposed to represent a rich hanging with the advantage of transparency; thus every enlargement of windows demanded more and more of diaper filling in. No wonder that diaper took like possession of the ornamented page, where, however, it soon became, and long remained, a hopelessly incongruous element.

But we are anticipating. The eleventh century, which witnessed such utter feebleness in Byzantine work, saw also the worst period of Western illumination. There had been much ebb and flow, not simply chronological, but varying with locality, the patronage of reigning houses, and the proficiency of different monasteries. Sometimes it was Bavaria, sometimes Franconia, or Saxony, or Bohemia that sent forth noticeable specimens; while England up to the time of the conquest took its turn with a genuine lifelike English art. But every hand seemed to fall nerveless or into the grossest barbarisms from the middle of the eleventh to the middle of the twelfth century, when something of an independent style in manuscript-art, began to show itself here and there, coincident with an improvement of detail in Romanesque architecture, and with the gradual rise of Gothic.

This independence is found chiefly in manuscripts of Germanic origin, where also we come upon the significant fact that subjects from common life are illustrated. A book of selections from the Fathers and other writers (the *Hortus Deliciarum*), composed for educational purposes about 1175, gives scenes from real life,

<sup>1</sup> Woltmann and Woermann, p. 316.

illustrating moral topics, instead of exclusively ecclesiastical. It was destroyed at the bombardment of Strasburg in 1871, but has been described as "an inexhaustible mine of every variety of subject which at that time occupied the thoughts of men."<sup>1</sup> Landscape, indeed, does not yet declare itself, but this descent among the affairs of life brings it within measurable distance.

The great awakening came with the thirteenth century, when art emerged from the cloister. Hitherto, safe in many a convent nook, the diligent monks had lavished their gold and vermillion, their blues and their greens, upon saintly story, and preserved art traditions, as they preserved much else, amid the blood and fire of the distracted ages. Now cities arose with municipal rights, and protection for the guilds and fraternities of workers, for whom municipal wealth, as well as princely houses, found occupation. The change was of the utmost moment. Yet, if set free from the cell and liberated from that ecclesiastical tradition which, though a bondage, had secured a certain dignity of presentment, individual genius did not at once find its opportunity; the brotherhood of the guild, no less than the brotherhood of the monastery, required that art should be practised only by certain authorised persons, and according to certain rules; but along with this, and it had much to do with the progress of art, the illuminator became so far independent that he was no longer also the scribe, and we have the artist as well as an art.

With this introduction of lay-workers in art the range of subject, already by the end of the twelfth century, as we have seen, showing indications of variety, became greatly enlarged. Such poems as the *Æneid* of Von Veldeck are illustrated as early as 1200, and presently all the poetry of chivalry was opened to the skill of the miniature painter. Calendars had long supplied more or less of subject, but at earlier dates the months were represented, if not by signs of the zodiac, by single figures only; now these figures were accompanied by something of a country scene. And as the thirteenth century passed into the fourteenth the field of illustration was still further extended. Aristotle's *Natural History*, a *History of the World*, a *Life of Alexander the Great*, come under the illuminator's hand, and by the end of the century, besides the richly-decorated religious books, including collections of pictures representing Bible histories, always in request, there were illustrated manuscripts upon all sorts of things—hunting, court ceremonies, the art of war, and presently

<sup>1</sup> Woltmann and Woermann, p. 287.

translations from Boccaccio and Petrarch, and the travels of Marco Polo and Mandeville. By this time there is landscape, but it had come in very slowly.

It is a disputed matter whether the chief source of this extraordinary activity in miniature painting lay in France or Flanders; it was certainly not in Germany, and Italy was quite out of the field. It appears certain that from the very beginning French illuminations were deficient in colour and poor in workmanship compared with what issued from Belgian or German sources, and by the end of the tenth century French illuminators had lost the power of working in body colour, and were reduced to rough pen outlines harshly filled in with flat tints; during the decadence of the eleventh century their work reached its lowest stage.



FIG. 43.—PIGS UNDER AN OAK.

With the twelfth century and the rise of Gothic architecture, in which France led the way, the style of French illumination improved, and in the thirteenth there is grace and humour in design, along with clear sharp drawing, and bright but flat unshaded colours, manifestly in imitation of the glass painting which was glorifying Gothic fanes. In imitation also of the same art, chequer-work generally took possession of the background.

Yet the pen outline was not entirely abandoned, but it now appears with greatly improved power of drawing, and delicate tints instead of harsh colours. A specimen of this is to be seen in a psalter (Brit. Mus., addit. 16,975) dating from the early part of the thirteenth century, and which is interesting from an illustration, among those of the calendar, to the month of November. (Fig. 43.) The season is indicated by a group of pigs at the foot of an oak tree, looking up eagerly for falling acorns. The merit lies with the pigs, for the tree shows the influence of current architectural feeling in the way in which its conventional foliage fills up a corner.

Nevertheless, the leaves have the likeness of oak leaves, and if the tree be young and slender, possessing nothing of the rugged picturesqueness we associate with the oak, it agrees in this respect with Chaucer's notion of an oak wood.

We must needs value even so slight an indication of landscape as this after so long a dearth, but still it is not from French hands, even in the fourteenth century, that we are to look for landscape-art. Their preference for chequer-work was a standing hindrance, and scarcely less so the inconceivable amount of delicate finish which they put into their work, their fondness for blues, and general thinness and poverty of colour.

Turning to Netherland work of the same period we find a very different style; there is not only the energy necessary to progress, but the colour-feeling, both as to richness, harmony, and tone, so necessary to landscape. Indications of these qualities appear from the first, in whatever illuminations can be traced to the Flemish guild-workers; and Dr. Waagen, in comparing their work with that of their French neighbours, assigns as its distinctive qualities, colours bright, cheerful, and yet harmonious, and the prevalence of a "very lovely light green"; again, "the gummy medium employed produces a clear and brilliant surface, the handling is pastose, with a broad touch, and softly gradated." And along with this we have "remarkable variety and richness of invention, and especially an uncommon truth to nature and a very perceptible tendency towards a humorous representation of scenes from common life."<sup>1</sup> In every one of these characteristics we see advantages for landscape which, there is reason to believe, first showed itself in Flemish illumination; while they justify Dr. Kugler's statement that "after 1250 A.D. every new movement in painting proceeds from the Netherlands." No doubt a vast amount of miniature work of great excellence belongs to books issued from Paris, but it is admitted that Flemish artists were largely employed there, engaged sometimes jointly with French illuminators upon the same volume, but always showing a distinctive excellence.

Yet it is not till about 1380 A.D. that real landscape backgrounds begin to appear. The gold background, more in favour with the Flemish miniaturists than diaper, seems to have been the first to yield, but the great "crisis of change," as Mr. Ruskin calls it, was the abandonment of diaper itself, of which the first symptoms

<sup>1</sup> Waagen's *Kunstwerke and Künstler in Paris*, iii. 326.

occur in the latter half of the fourteenth century (for we cannot take into account the curious ninth-century Vulgate already described), but it is not marked till early in the fifteenth. "Then," to quote a well-known passage, "the spirit of art becomes ever more changed, and thenceforward it gradually proposes imitation more and more as an end, till it reaches the Turnerian landscape."

Diaper was in the first place superseded by an intensely deep blue sky, exquisitely gradated to the white light of the horizon. Flowers had already practised artists in gradation, why not apply that skill to the wonderful blue of the sky? With the sky presently came clouds, and all things else, daylight, air, the outdoor world in its proper breathing space. What an opening for the imagination! We cannot look upon one of those early skies without a thrill of delight. Not the least important of the results that followed was the appearance along the white horizon of dark-blue mountain ranges, in sweeps and curves, cutting sharply against the pale low light, so that one of the most poetic of landscape incidents was also one of the first to present itself in landscape-art.

In the fifteenth century landscape may be said to have bloomed into all its beauty of fair colours throughout manuscript-art. We will now illustrate its character by a few examples, which will also bear upon our conclusion that we owe its development chiefly to the Flemings.

In a French two-volumed Bible of the latter half of the fourteenth century (Brit. Mus., Harleian, 4831), characteristically, there is still diaper. Where Jacob wrestles with the angel, green trees and grass betoken some capability for landscape, but there is only red diaper behind them! Yet more incongruous is its occurrence in the *Translation of Elijah*. The prophet, in a blue four-wheeled cart, drawn by two horses tandem, with an angel astride the shaft horse, is mounting up, not into sky, but into chequers! The trees in these miniatures, if somewhat conventionalised, have reverted to the simple natural forms of early Christian mosaic, such as those of S. Apollinare Nuovo at Ravenna; but this and other evidences of landscape feeling we should be inclined to explain by the fact that in some of these historic scenes the style of colouring indicates a Flemish hand.

In the Prayer-Book of Margaret of Bavaria (Brit. Mus., Harleian, 2897), variously assigned to 1389 and to about 1400 A.D., the miniatures are chiefly Flemish work. Although most of the sub-

jects have diaper backgrounds, there are to be observed amongst them some of dark-blue gradated to pale-gray. No indication of clouds occurs, but this appearance of tender aerial tints so early, and in connection with Netherland art, is a fact to be noted. Rocks have that tendency to sharp protrusions (Fig. 44) (natural to formations where thin rock-strata are mingled with soil) which we shall find Gozzoli to have imitated at Pisa. Trees are of two kinds—stiff, conventional, separate leaved, or of a generalised, though still conventional form, which was much adopted in the Netherlands. (Fig. 44.)

Quite at the beginning of the fifteenth century (1410-1415), in a Prayer-Book almost entirely illustrated by a Fleming (Brit. Mus., addit. 16,997), we have very delicate little miniatures about two inches square. "The finest Netherland art predominates throughout the work,"<sup>1</sup> and the striking characteristic is the feeling for tone, gradation, and the sentiment of landscape that pervades many of the scenes. In the *Salutation*, for instance, there are soft brown hills toned charmingly into a purple blue sky, against which there rise tall gray towers faintly defined. We may remark that intensely blue skies seem to be generally attributable to French work, when diaper was abandoned; tender, more aerial tints appear to have come first from Flemish hands. That this Prayer-Book, though a Netherland production, was executed for a French patron, may possibly account for some of the French characteristics it contains.

FIG. 44.—TREE AND ROCK, NETHERLAND WORK, FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

In a Prayer-Book, dated 1420, at the Bodleian Library (Canon. Liturg., No. 75) we can compare Netherland and French work conveniently together. *David Praying* is a specimen of the former (Fig. 45). The sky is gradated, though the light towards the horizon is curiously produced by silvering. The trees, of distinctive Netherland type—a type followed, as we shall find, by Fra Angelico—are of the pointed sort intended to represent boughs and their stems, conventional enough, but the foliage is worked with

<sup>1</sup> Waagen's *Treasures*, i. 125.

a brush, and has light and shade. In a *Flight into Egypt*, on the other hand, a French miniature, the trees are like ill-drawn spiders, and gorgeous pattern takes the place of sky.

The poverty of French landscape at this time is still further seen in another Bodleian MS., *The History of Justin* (2, 29, fol.). Here the trees of the French portion, though not spiders, are but flat patches of green of a beehive shape, the edges scratched in with a pen; while those by a Netherland hand are carefully modelled with a brush into semblance of branches. The chief interest of this MS., however, arises from many of the subjects being unfinished, which reveals the fact that the landscapist did his work first, the figures being as yet only outlined. There were then

FIG. 45.—ROCKS AND TREES, FROM A PRAYER-BOOK, BODLEIAN.

FIG. 46.—A ROCK OF THE SEASHORE: HISTORY OF JUSTIN.

landscape-painters by profession in those days, though of poor mechanical sort, yet let us give them credit for one evident study from nature, in certain isolated rocks rising from the sea, the original of which must have been noticed somewhere on the French coast, they resemble those of the Channel Islands. (Fig 46.)

The poems of Christina of Pisa (Brit. Mus., Harleian, 4431), dating from the first third of the fifteenth century, lavishly illustrated by both French and Netherland artists, have been referred to as containing "one of the earliest specimens of landscape-painting proper in existence."<sup>1</sup> The instance given is a drawing of "two lovers in Netherland costumes, standing in an ordered garden, which was evidently painted from nature." Without underrating the beauty of this miniature, certainly one of the best, there are

<sup>1</sup> *Flemish and French Pictures*, by F. G. Stephens.



others in this volume which seem to contain more of "landscape proper"; we would instance one, in which groups of trees (Fig. 47) rising from bare hills, and standing out dark against a twilight sky, possess a simple charm which implies a good deal of landscape feeling.

FIG. 47.—HILLS AND TREES IN THE POEMS OF CHRISTINA OF PISA.

The advanced naturalism of the trees is also apparent. But the subjects are strangely unequal in merit, owing, no doubt, to the variety of hands employed. Chequer-work still occurs in many. There is a good deal of woodland, always represented by small straight-stemmed trees close together, and dark with forest darkness between. In one such scene the trees fork picturesquely under

FIG. 48.—ROCK PLATFORM AND WAVES IN THE CHRISTINA MINIATURES.

FIG. 49.—SUPERNATURAL CLOUDS.

their green umbrage, but the gold diaper above destroys all sense of nature. These straight-stemmed forking trees Botticelli seems to have imitated. Others often resemble those we shall find in Giotto's chapel at Padua, while clouds are ribands of crimson and gold, curiously repeating the familiar shapes of early mosaics. In one or two, waves of the sea have to be rendered, and the result,



as in a *Theseus and Ariadne*, resembles, unfortunately, nothing so much as the curls of a barrister's wig. (Fig. 48.) In the same picture, as in others, we may notice carefully-drawn rock-platforms which speak of conscientious observation; and some are exactly

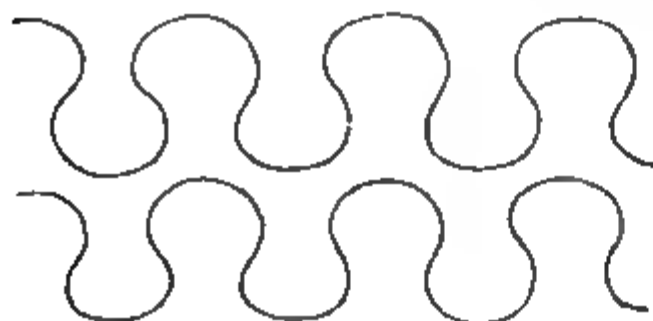


FIG. 50.—HERALDIC SIGN FOR CLOUDS.

those of Giotto, about a century earlier. One feature is altogether extraordinary; the clouds that support divinities or sacred personages are frilled and furbelowed till they look like the lips of gigantic purple flowers (Fig. 49). But the fashion is not peculiar to this volume, it

is the adopted method for supernatural clouds during a considerable period.<sup>1</sup>

The Bedford Missal of about the same date, the first third of the fifteenth century, is wonderfully rich in illustration. There are multitudes of gay little rounds, the size of half-a-crown, where the landscape is all as gay as the people, and vivid greens, often heightened with gold, and intense blues abound. The pictures in this book are by different hands, and are interesting as showing the transition stage in which landscape is still conventional and crude, side by side with the advancing naturalism of Flemish art. This

FIG. 51.—CALIGRAPHIC CLOUDS IN THE ST. ETHELWOLD MS.

last is met with in certain larger and more express landscape subjects. Among them is another *Translation of Elijah*, but now the white horses that draw the cart (red in this case, not blue) are prancing into a veritable sky, only that it is sprinkled with "patines

<sup>1</sup> Mr. J. Waller, the well-known archaeologist, explains these clouds by the "nebuly" of heraldry, which appear thus (Fig. 50) early in the thirteenth century. They are found in the arms of the elder branch of the De la Poles, merchants of Hull, as also in those of the merchant adventurers of London, the merchants of the Staple and others, all of whose fortunes depended upon the favour of the elements—the winds and the seas. The earliest example known of this form is in the painting at Chaldon, Surrey, where it makes a separation between the place of punishment and that of salvation; the date of this is as near as possible 1200 A.D. An earlier form is shown in the Benedictional of St. Ethelwold, belonging to the Duke of Devonshire; here we find strange scroll-like shapes, which seem to indicate an Irish caligraphic origin. (Fig. 51.)

of bright gold." One or two details are given with local truth, as the laminated rocks (Fig. 52), but there is small evidence of that poetic feeling which is the soul of landscape. In the *Angel and the Shepherds* (Fig. 53) the picture is crowded up to the top with green shaped hills crowned with buildings, quite out of perspective, and planted up and down with clusters of small trees of Netherland character. The sheep are similarly disposed in twos and threes, and the shepherds are gigantic figures. Yet in the centre a distant dark hill-top shows one little group of trees against the light, it may be of early dawn, a similar effect to that we have referred to in the Christina volume.



FIG. 52.—LAMINATED ROCKS OF THE BEDFORD MISSAL.

The perfection of this miniature-art is perhaps best shown in the leaves from a *Book of Hours of the Blessed Virgin*, accompanied by illustrations to the calendar (Brit. Mus., 24,098), certainly Flemish, and supposed to be the work of Gerhard Hoornbach in the fifteenth century. These miniatures are full of landscape of an exquisite delicacy, finish, and beauty of sweet colour. In the sacred portion there occur some scenes in which the pathos of nature is fully recognised. In an *Entombment* (Fig. 54) the dark gray rocks of simple form, enclosing the holy cave, are crested with a few trees rising into the evening gloom; across the sky lies a broad bar of orange twilight, against which a jagged line of purple mountain rises, with, scarcely visible at its foot, a few gray buildings on a nearer height. It

FIG. 53.—ANGELS AND THE SHEPHERDS: BEDFORD MISSAL.

would seem that the harsh white light of the earlier manuscripts, as well as the intense blues, revolted the Flemish eye for harmony and colour.

One might doubt whether the calendar be by the same hand. The pathos here is of quite another sort—that of tender flowers or of fresh springtide. In the *August* we have harvest as it is seen, not on waving golden uplands, but beside the Belgic waterways. A large church towers above the trees of a grove; the gardens of a great house are near, a canal, spanned by a small bridge, overshadowed by small trees on one side and with the harvest plot on the other,

receives delicious reflections upon its lucid surface. The sky is softly blue. No doubt it is all too gaily green, but the verdant look is charming nevertheless. Yet more charming is the *September*, for there the graceful trees are tinged with autumn tints, and lift their delicate leafage against a

FIG. 54.—ENTOMBMENT, BY GERHARDT  
HOORNBAACH.

pale streaked sky, while one or two are already bare. A cottage stands in the midst, and a quiet foreground of yellow serenity harmonises the whole. It is a pure and perfect bit of water-colour drawing—a most lovely outcome of the illuminator's art.

With this charming book may be compared a French work of the same date, the *Roman de la Rose* (Brit. Mus., Harleian, 4425), in which, with all its beauty, we miss the tone and the poetic feeling of the Netherlander. There is little beyond a tender gaiety of tint and elegance of drawing; and there is a good deal of that vivid blue—a torture to the eye—which we associate with the Breughel school to come. Similar in delicacy and minuteness of touch, but also in flatness and feebleness of effect, is the curious view of London in the *Biblia Regia* (Brit. Mus., 16, F 11), executed for Henry VII. about 1490. The sky again is intensely blue, and upon it the numerous spires of the city are limned with a fine brush-point in white and gray. The water swirling through the arches of the old bridge is in the same way expressed by fine white lines. Throughout the picture there is infinitely delicate detail, but not much notion of landscape, and we should adduce it as distinctively French rather than Flemish in workmanship.

Yet in the same volume is a frontispiece to the *Poems of the Duc d'Orléans*, containing a landscape, like that of Van der Weyden, of the same period, and, whether by a French hand or not, certainly showing Flemish influence. There is the vista of a stream, a bridge and high castle-towers, smooth green hummocks crown an overhanging rock, a serene glow of light rests on the horizon, and distant water,—all the features with which we shall presently become familiar in many a Flemish picture.

Far more imposing than any of these works are the large drawings in the *Thesaurus Historiarum*, a French folio of the fifteenth century (Cotton, Aug. A 5). Mr. Ruskin has copied his specimen of mediæval rock (*Modern Painters*, iii. 245) from this fine volume. The rocks are of what we shall have to call the Ghirlandaio type, and possess a certain truth, however hard and clean; but to us the book is remarkable (and all the more if the pictures be of French workmanship, which the fine brush-lines, the stipple, and the low cool neutral tints render likely) for one or two extraordinary indications of fine landscape feeling. Among the early scenes is a conflict of armoured and mounted men, themselves in gloom; the last pink light of sunset lingers in the sky; it faintly reddens a castle-tower, and tints with red a rocky scar above the blue ghastly blades and tilting spears. It soon will fade, and dim night will fall over glimmering armour and white faces of the slain.

No other scene is so poetic; but in one over a wide landscape rise wonderfully truthful clouds, tenderly shaded in their rounded masses, just silver-edged, and all lovingly reflected in a still bay below. This is a bit of surprisingly advanced landscape. But it is only a bit; the rest is composed of low rounded hills, spotted with bushes, while rocks near at hand are stuck into the soil, instead of rising naturally out of broken ground. The picture, in fact, as a whole, exhibits the standing faults of mediæval landscape; there is no natural association of landscape features, and consequently, however carefully worked in detail, the result is unreal, formal, and weak, especially in that crux of early, as of later art, the foreground, smooth with a most unnatural smoothness, and tufted here and there with a handful of grass or flowers. The exception to this unnaturalness is almost invariably in the distances, and especially in the mountain ranges, full of grace, not only of form, but of tint, recalling those lovely shapes of blue which stretch along the southern horizon of the Bavarian plains.

We have gathered but a few specimens from the vast store of manuscript-art to show how landscape took possession of the pages, how rapidly it developed, and especially how much its captivating qualities were due to Flemish genius. In tracing the course of the illuminator's art we must allow that it failed to transmit landscape from classic times to the modern; but, through the many dark centuries that followed the entombment of all the antique world had won, illuminations at least sustained a thin stream of colour and of delicate workmanship. At first this trended eastward from Italian soil to Byzantium; then, seen but at fitful intervals, it passed northward and westward, till suddenly it burst into all the colours of spring, and flooded with beauty Flanders and France.

Doubtless illumination was not the sole vehicle of colour which found its opportunity in architecture, in mosaics, however rude, in woven stuffs and embroidery, and lastly in glass; but we contend that it was the peculiar art of illumination alone that gradually, in its subjects, its materials, its technical processes, and particularly in the delicate tinting and brush-work favoured by the parchment page as by nothing else, led on at last to the representation of landscape in those elements of its charm which depend upon bright colours, transparency, delicacy, air, and light, all the sweetness of sunshine upon buildings, trees, and sward, all the loveliness of blue distance. It is always a gay land to live in, this of the illuminator, distinctly a northern land of grass and freshness, of castle and convent and red-tiled town; a land of knight and lady, and of sacred personages, habited like the quaint people of the north, yet not unvisited by "angels and ministers of grace" with wings of gold and crimson.

The old classic landscape of grove and temple, and curious surprises of rock and water, portrayed with broad and simple tints upon the wall, not only belonged to a distant region, but had long perished out of sight, or lay buried deep in dust. But in these northern lands, and under a faith, strong at least, as faith, had arisen from the far-blown seed this fair thing, expressing with a sort of childlike wonder the beauty of the verdant earth. As yet this art was little conscious of the pathetic or the sterner side of nature, for the Christian occupation then was chiefly cheerful fighting; and relaxation was found in the bower and the pleasaunce. It was an art that after fuller elaboration upon the panel had to pass through the alembic of the Italian mind to learn its true powers and its destiny.

Side by side with Flemish miniature-painting there had grown up, during the fourteenth century, painting on panels, not of large size, but appropriate to relic-chests and altar-fronts. It was an extension of the illuminator's art, favoured by a brilliant invention, which gave solidity and transparency to colours; and it brought into prominence the painter of pictures framed and set up for the edification and delight of spectators. In this branch of art landscape immediately found great development, and it is these early Flemish painters—successors to the Flemish illuminators—who must next engage our attention.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### EARLY FLEMISH LANDSCAPE.

Hubert van Eyck	. 1366 ?-1426.	Gerard van der Meire	1410 ?
John van Eyck	. 1386 ?-1440-41.	Gheerardt David	. -1523.
Roger van der Weyden	1400-1464.	Joachim Patenier	. -1524.
— Ouwater	. 1400 ?	Quentin Matsys	. 1466-1530.
Hans Memlinc	. 1430-1495.	Henri de Bles	. 1480 ?
Dierick Bouts	. ?-1475.	Jan Mostaert	. 1474-1556.

THE northern climate discouraged the wall-painting that filled the sunny corridors of Italy, nor did the contracted space and niggard light of Gothic architecture afford the same opportunity. It was natural that art in northern countries should betake itself to the dainty surfaces of vellum as one resource, and for larger displays to painting on panel; while again to this matter of climate was due the early use of oil and varnishes. In all this there was a special adaptability to landscape, and it is not surprising that it should appear upon panel with all the brilliance and delicacy with which it was treated in manuscripts. Then the wealth of the Flemish cities had its influence. That gorgeous municipal life required art, but it must be art that could be carried about, fitted over altars and shrines, flaunted on pennons and banners, or worked with infinite cost and pains upon relic-chests. Under such conditions there is seen, rising into splendour, and delighting in finish without stint, the art of the Van Eycks, and under such conditions, that art easily lent itself to the landscape in which Flemish manuscripts excelled.

But for the prevalence of landscape in the early Flemish school, and earlier than in Italy, there was, we believe, a yet deeper reason. Nature in those northern parts offers nothing of the sublime, and falls but seldom into those pathetic moods which ravish the heart. She is green and fresh, "easy to be entreated," and her scenery can be enjoyed with far greater freedom than in the south, where heat closes the outlook for most hours of the day, leaving only early

morning or late evening for the observation of the landscape painter, and then presenting him with difficulties which it requires considerable art-culture to overcome. It might be expected, therefore, that landscape as an art would show itself first among the easier conditions of the north, and acquire there sooner a certain perfection. Whatever might be the reason, such was the fact, as may be seen both in illuminations and panels.

When in these days the traveller takes the railway route to the Rhine he crosses at Liège the broad beautiful valley of the Meuse. The stream has come winding down through rocky gorges and charming reaches from Dinant and Namur; it flows, here turning northward, to Maestricht, and farther still to the north, just before entering Holland, it passes through Maeseyck. This is the birthplace of the two brothers, HUBERT and JOHN VAN EYCK, whose names stand at the head of Flemish art, and whose influence extended over all Europe. Hubert, "so far as one can tell," writes the best authority, was born about 1366, and John some years, it is supposed even twenty years, later.

This valley of the Meuse was early a busy, wealthy, and art-loving district, the monastery of Alt Eyck having produced miniatures famed for their brilliance as early as the ninth century. Maestricht itself was the seat of an art-school, so that the bright flowing river has not inaptly been compared to the Arno, rendered famous at the same period by the art which centred in Florence; John van Eyck and Fra Angelico were born almost within the same year.

But the Meuse could not shelter art, as, notwithstanding all troubles, did the banks of the Arno. The Burgundian wars reddened the waters of the northern streams from Dinant to Maeseyck, and the Van Eycks found Ghent a better place to live in. John, being so much the younger, must long have acted as assistant to his brother; but in 1410 they were both at work in Ghent, "favourite painters" of Michelle de France, wife of Philip of Burgundy, who kept his court there. She pined and died amidst the murderous conflict between her husband and her brother; and some time afterwards John van Eyck is found at the Hague, "Our gracious lord's painter," the "gracious lord" being John of Bavaria, Count of Holland and Luxemburg. That did not last long, however; John of Bavaria died, and Ghent reclaimed the greater John to carry on the works of his brother, now dead. He afterwards



lived at Bruges, where he purchased a house, and where he died in 1441 after a long course of distinction and honour in the service of the Duke of Burgundy, who was godfather to his daughter. She, after her father's death, retired to a convent in the old home, Maeseyck.

It is to John that we chiefly owe the landscape for which, as for other great achievements, the Van Eyck name is famous. It is altogether amazing for its date—nay, in some respects for any date; and comparing it with what Angelico was doing at the same period, our astonishment increases. Yet, as we shall show, it by no means interferes with the great position that must still be assigned to Masaccio, whose short life ran its course far within the term of Van Eyck's. The landscape of the latter is a singularly realistic landscape, wrought to delightful perfection of detail, and with splendid transparency and depth of colour, this last being unrivalled. It is miniature landscape, finished to incredible minuteness; and it is landscape carried to a far horizon with the utmost delicacy of aerial perspective, the linear being as yet imperfect. It is such a scene, we may say, as a well-placed window commanding a vast prospect would offer on some splendid sunny afternoon, when nothing dimmed the clearness. Not a little of the wonder of the Van Eycks' art consists in its technical perfection as a work in oil, a perfection which seems as if it had been reached at once; but this perhaps is owing to the singular fact that all the earlier works of both painters are missing, destroyed in the horrible convulsions of subsequent times. Any way, they must have developed their method of working in oils and resins with extraordinary rapidity and precision.

It is in the great picture of *The Adoration of the Lamb*, of which the centre portion alone remains in the place for which it was intended, the Cathedral of St. Bavon at Ghent, that the Van Eyck landscape first displays itself. Standing before it, we are at once struck with the fact that it is a large miniature, but by a master hand. It shows a wide undulating tract of luxuriant meadowland, richly toned, though gay with flowers in the foreground; dark masses of wood crown the several knolls, the trees, exactly as in manuscripts, standing, with short stiff straight stems, close, yet not too close together; and—true to fields of earth, if not to those celestial—a path winds temptingly over the sward towards a grove upon a hill. Beyond all this, peering up from behind the woods,

are seen the innumerable towers and spires of that great city, the "New Jerusalem." The number suggests perpetual worship, and one might imagine that all the churches in Flanders had contributed types of architecture. Still farther are glimpses of a far sweet land, with long lines of gray blue hill sinking and swelling around a silver sheet of water set in the midst. One abrupt mountain-form rises to the left, defined against the lovely clear white light of the horizon. In the blue above, float a few small round clouds. Over this landscape there is diffused a glowing warmth, not exactly as of the sun, though a soft deep shading among the slopes indicates some common source of light. It must be confessed that in this famous scene the great expanse of meadow, with its mystic altar and groups of adoring saints, can hardly be called "landscape"; that description can only apply to the glimpses of scenery beyond, where a few dwellings of singularly terrestrial aspect appear among the woods; and indeed, from its formal arrangement, we should be inclined to think that in this centrepiece of the great composition we have more the work of Hubert than of John, for the former, who certainly planned the whole, would naturally make a beginning upon this portion of it.

This supposition is strengthened when we find in the wings, now at Berlin, scenery so much more interesting as to suggest another hand. In four panels, the "Holy Warriors" and the "Holy Pilgrims" — the former on horseback, the latter on foot — march through "the wilderness of this world" as followers of the Lamb. The way lies through rocky defiles, where the quarry-like crags rise above their heads; these cliffs are carefully studied from nature, though hard and brown, and separated by no atmosphere from the figures below. But cresting these crags, and descending into every hollow, is a wonderful richness of vegetation which, with no slur of detail, is yet soft and blended, deep in tone, and restful to the eye in its clustering masses of foliage; similar in these respects to the centre portion, it differs much from the metallic hardness of later men, while it shows a close observation of nature, as in the cypresses and palms that in the *Holy Hermits* lift their dark forms against the twilight sky, with here and there an umbrella-pine.

The way of the pilgrims is through wild places, but rising above the crags and the woodland into the sky, are seen at intervals the tall towers of cities—hints, if we rightly read their purpose, of the busy world, "the Vanity Fair" around. Farther still, amidst a

wonderful daylight and purity of atmosphere, there appears in one of the panels of the *Holy Warriors* a glimpse of landscape of the rarest charm. It shows how well John van Eyck, if it be he, understood the fascination possessed by mountain-forms that rise, as it were, unexpectedly from unseen depths, and peer into the blue from behind near dark masses of hill. It shows too, as has been already pointed out, how every combination or opposition of tossing lines was appreciated by him, how he felt the captivation of faint and fainter tints of distance, and, remarkable enough for the

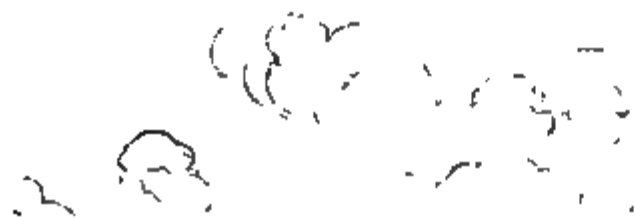


FIG. 55.—FROM THE HOLY WARRIORS: VAN EYCK, BERLIN.

time, the loveliness of pure snow against a pure sky. As for the sky, it absolutely shines with its own light, a perfect ether, flecked only with vivid little wisps and flakes of cloud. The castle-walls and towers that jut from the edge of an abrupt hill in the distance come in with effective picturesqueness, and an air of truth that raises one's curiosity as to whether, or where, he saw this in some actual scene. (Fig. 55.)

One interesting identification can certainly be made. In a picture of the Annunciation, upon the outside of one of the upper wings, is shown through the window of the Virgin's chamber a street in Ghent, presumably a view from the house in which the picture

was painted (said to have been No. 26 Koey Street). An old gateway, now destroyed, appears at the end of the street, and on the right the weathercock of a spire is (as the writer believes) the identical dragon taken from St. Sophia at Constantinople, and given to the city by Count Baldwin in 1204, which still swings to the wind on the belfry-spire. The houses on the left offer to the street a succession of gables, their shadows upon the pavement given with scrupulous care, while a group of figures at a street-corner are touched in with all the precision and brightness of Canaletto.<sup>1</sup>

But the marvellous landscape of J. van Eyck is more characteristically displayed in some of his smaller pictures. The finest of these is No. 162 in the Louvre, a votive picture, in which the donor, the Chancellor Rollin, a name we shall meet with again, kneels before the Virgin and Child. As John van Eyck was an admirable portrait-painter, the chancellor is a figure well worth looking at; not so the sacred personages; to that height he could not rise, and for such creations we must look to Italy, with its skilful drawing and feeling for ideal beauty. But if we turn to the landscape which fills the centre of the picture, seen through the pillars of the arcade in which the donor performs his devotions, and over the battlements, where two figures are standing, there is something quite worthy of the chancellor's portrait. Away to a distant horizon of snow mountains, excellently rendered in their glittering multitude, stretches the wonder of a landscape. A broad river flows down the centre of the vista glowing with light, perfectly gradated, and reflecting every object, especially the arches of a bridge that crosses it in the foreground and unites a large city with its suburb. This is a city full of churches, buildings, and quaint houses, each of them depicted with conscientious care to the smallest detail; a city full of people that crowd the streets; it is said, indeed, that with a magnifying glass as many as two thousand may be counted! On the immediately surrounding hills every hedge and tree and bush is shown, while nevertheless the whole is bathed in a tender depth of colour, and is full of air as well as light. (Fig. 56.)

Again we ask, where did he see this—the snow mountains, the river, the city? Surely they belong to one scene somewhere! One account of it says that the city is Bruges; but while the painter may have studied certain details from the place where he lived, it seems

<sup>1</sup> This part of the great picture belongs to the portion now at Brussels, consisting of the figures of Adam and Eve.

impossible to doubt that the river, the hills, and the mountains exist somewhere far away from Bruges, and the suggestion of the Louvre catalogue that we have a view of Lyons, with its Cathedral of St. Etienne upon the banks of the Saône, strikes us as much more probable. Are, then, the mountains those of Savoy? and does Mt. Blanc rear itself in the midst? The writer has not been favoured with a sufficiently clear day to decide these points, and must confess also that he could not find any one view satisfactorily to agree

FIG. 56.—VIEW OF A CITY: J. VAN EYCK, LOUVRE.

with that of the picture. The fact that Van Eyck went on various long journeys for the Duke of Bavaria, painting the portraits of possible wives, renders it certain that other landscapes than those of the Low Countries were familiar to him.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Hamerton, in his *Life of Turner* (p. 157) thinks the scenery of this picture a reminiscence of that of Lyons, and adds this criticism: "In this early landscape we have plenty of detail, for nothing is slurred over, either from negligence or in obedience to any theory of simplification; the artist has done his utmost in every way, and carried as well as he could, even to the snowy mountains, the shining crown of his earthly landscape, the same exquisite and loving finish that he bestowed on the pearls of the heavenly diadem which the angels bear to the Virgin. But the details of the landscape, though numerous, are too clearly defined. The artist does not lose and find them again, as the eye loses and finds details in nature; he sees a certain quantity of them which he

Another picture of similar character is *The Virgin and Child*, with a monk and St. Barbara, at Burleigh House. It is only a fourth of the size of the Louvre Van Eyck, but its detail is even more wonderful. It contains two landscapes. In the one is the view of "a town composed of an incredible number of houses," and filling "an undulating plain which swells into gentle eminences, and rises into distant hills clothed with vegetation." There is also a canal with a drawbridge, giving opportunity for reflections in the water, and a stream wandering away till lost in the horizon. In the other, in middle distance, is another town "with innumerable figures, and shops with goods in them. The atmosphere is clear, the sky limpid and blue, filled with flights of birds, and enlivened by a couple of broken, fleecy clouds."<sup>1</sup>

A third picture of like purpose is at Dresden. Here, but only seen through a window at the side, is another of Van Eyck's miracles of landscape. It is but two inches high, and half an inch in width, but there is room for a town, or a towered monastery, for fields decked with trees, delicate blue hills, and beyond them—surely because he loved the spectacle—sparkling snowy Alps! The sky above is one unclouded lustrous pearl.

These pictures of John van Eyck's carry to the highest perfection the miniature-art of the manuscripts, an art which it is supposed by some was practised occasionally by both himself and his sister, and in this respect Lord Lindsay is perhaps justified in calling him "the father of landscape painting," declaring that "all that we gaze at with rapture in the works of Poussin and Claude, Cuyp and Ruysdael, nay, even in the lovely backgrounds of Perugino, Pinturricchio, Ghirlandaio, Bellini, Francia, Zingaro, Leonardo, and Raphael, may be traced back to his sunny banks, shady woods, and glittering waters, the green freshness of his foregrounds, and the transparent purity of the atmosphere, through which the eye roves delightfully over hill and mountain till lost in azure distance. He was thus the first to feel, or at least to express in art, that enjoyment of natural beauty out of doors to which, judging from their early painting at

sets in order like pretty objects in a shop window; in fact, his arcade does strikingly resemble such a window, with models set behind it and carefully coloured." This criticism is, I think, more applicable to some of the attempts at distance by early Italians,—Pollaiuolo for instance. Van Eyck is somewhat open to it, but then he gives wonderful and luminous atmosphere.

<sup>1</sup> Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *Early Flemish Painters*, p. 102, quoted in the absence of personal knowledge.

least, the Italians seem to have been originally less susceptible than the Teutonic race, or, if equally susceptible, unquestionably less conscious and demonstrative of it.”<sup>1</sup>

There is much in this passage demanding qualification, but it expresses a general truth, and does not exceed the estimate of Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, who say that, “as Landscapists the Van Eycks are not only faultless,—they are beyond all praise.” John van Eyck certainly was the first, aided as he was by the oil and varnish medium he perfected, to shed over a landscape the vivid glow of sunlit atmosphere; the body-colour of the manuscripts did not allow of this. He first too, so far as we know, recognising the charm of distance, laid out a vast and vanishing view; he first gave on panel the delicacy of contour and tint, of distant mountain-forms; he, first of painters, saw the snowy Alps shining in the sky, and in several of these points he was not only the first, but has remained to this day foremost.

In what he attempted he left nothing more to be done, and in what he attempted contemporary Italian art, and for long afterwards, for reasons already given, was nowhere. Angelico is but quaint and infantile beside him. Benozzo Gozzoli, coming a little later, becomes ludicrous in comparison. Later still Piero Della Francesca, with all his knowledge of perspective, cannot bear juxtaposition with the great Fleming. When the Van Eyck method of oil-painting was adopted in Italy there was less difference, but there was never the same wonderful sunshine over a scene, nor the same purity and finish to the farthest verge of sight.

The art of Italy had indeed a different origin from that of Van Eyck, and sought a different and higher end. It did not begin with the vellum, but with the wall; mosaics and frescoes provided models, and not the golden page. By slow degrees it assimilated what the Fleming had to give, and presumably was able to bestow what the Fleming never dreamed of. Already in Masaccio there was one who, wholly uninfluenced by Flemish landscape, showed in a few slight backgrounds what the glance of genius had revealed in nature beyond green fields, brown rock, blue hills, and glittering waters. He, judging from the few remnants left to us, felt the soul that was in nature, especially that which breathes in the solitary, the sad, the mysterious. But it was long before Italian art recognised what he had done. Italians preferred in the main, and even to the time of

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Art*, iii. 305.



Michael Angelo, "the Flemish style," and if we may say so, comparing Van Eyck with Masaccio, though they were contemporaries, "that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural."

John van Eyck, like Masaccio, is isolated by the inferiority of his successors. A contemporary, ROGER VAN DER WEYDEN (called also De le Pasture), has for us an interest of his own. He was not of the Van Eyck school, but, born at Tournai and living at Brussels, he took an independent course, and may almost be looked upon as a rival of the greater painter. As with Van Eyck, his early pictures are lost, the oldest known being dated some twelve years later than the oldest of Van Eyck's. The date of his birth is 1400, and of his death 1464; he was thus probably about fifteen years younger than John van Eyck. One striking difference from the style of the latter is thus described by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle<sup>1</sup>:—"Though he must have seen the brilliant pictures of the Van Eycks . . . the sun for him seems never to have shone but in early hours; for the clear morning light under which he presents all objects is the twilight before sunrise; a light which with impartial kindness illumines the innermost recesses of an apartment, the still current of a river, the crags on its banks, the towers on its slopes, or the distant snow mountains on its horizon."

This pale clearness is attributed to his long habit of painting in tempera, showing how great an advantage was possessed by the Van Eycks in their oil medium; but it will be noticed in the above description how similar some of his subjects were to those of Van Eyck, and this becomes still more striking when in the Munich Gallery we stand before a picture (No. 634) of St. Luke drawing the portraits of the Virgin and Child, a picture which, when it was in Brussels, there is reason for believing that Dürer himself once beheld, recording in his diary that he gave two stüber to have it unlocked. (Fig. 57.) Here, exactly as in Van Eyck's Louvre picture, is a landscape seen between the pillars of an arcade. Two figures stand in the same manner looking over battlements, and a wide expanse of water winds away into a distance of lovely blue hills. But there are differences. These are hills, not mountains, still less Alps. The water is more of a lake than a river, and its surface is broken with floppy little waves, given in carefully-diminishing perspective; high cliffs and knolls skirt the water on one side, and large convent buildings rise with high walls from its nearer banks. On the other

<sup>1</sup> *Early Flemish Painters*, p. 185.



side there is a town and a street showing a tempting vista, while beyond are low hills with a church tower peering over a shoulder, just such as to make one wish to walk that way over the sloping meadows. The sky is charmingly flecked with light touches of cloud, and the whole is wonderfully bright, certainly under no twilight, though without the glow of Van Eyck. This background must evidently have been painted in some sort of competition with the latter's Rollin picture—a fact, perhaps, a little explained when we find that, for this same Chancellor Rollin, Van der Weyden

FIG. 57.—VIEW OF A CITY: VAN DER WEYDEN, MUNICH.

executed at an earlier date one of his largest compositions. It may be added, however, that the landscape of the Louvre picture seems to have been more closely imitated by Van der Weyden (at least in one particular) in the triptych possessed by the Duke of Westminster, for there distant snow-mountains, so strange a feature for these lowlanders to introduce, illuminate the far horizon in the same manner.

At the Städel Museum, Frankfort, is a *Baptism* with an exquisitely delicate distance, and water, always his favourite device, meandering away towards a range of mountains painted with marvellous miniature-work, while the nearer rocks beside the water, unlike the simple inventions of Angelico, or the later artificial quarry-work of the Italians, are carefully studied from nature. At Berlin

are two of his works. In a *Pietà* (534A) there are no mountains, but long lines of hill, clear and soft; in the foreground a pond with pollard trees, done with exquisite truth, though hard in touch; the reflections of the trees in the water, we may add, betray his fondness for the watery mirror. In the *Baptism* (534A), painted upon a scale of incredible minuteness, appears a range of distant mountains seen through an atmosphere of intense clearness.

*The Adoration of the Kings* in the Munich gallery has a landscape of richer colour than usual. In this, to the left, the eye follows upward a long street through a town, which we may suppose is Bethlehem, though the place is evidently a large city and all brand-new and tidy, a neatly-paved drain running down the middle of the street, which is full of people; it is a perfectly Flemish scene, and painted in that spirit of minute finish which came afterwards to be called "Dutch." Even in the inevitable broken-arched, ruined, and thatched buildings, supposed to represent the remains of the house of Jesse, the father of David—if it had not also reference to the decay of the Old Dispensation—not a straw in the thatch, not a beam, not a broken stone, but is rendered with precision; not at all as if it had "come so" under the tender and variable touch of time, but as if it had been carefully put together, a sham ruin, to look like nature; this, indeed, was exactly the case, and it took ages even among Italians to unlearn that habit.

This conscientious failure to effect its object is always, as pointed out in a previous chapter, due to defective art-power, to the want of knowing where and how to generalise and suggest, and so to convey, without an impossible literal minuteness, the careless inextricable confusion of forms and tints effected by nature in the processes of decay. But it might also be connected with that deadness to the sympathetic side of nature common to this school, and indeed to all early art. It is said of Van der Weyden that in no single face that he painted is there any "approach to a smile, while we may observe many a face wrung with agony, and many a tear"; also, we are told, "he preferred subjects which conveyed sentiments of grief and pity."<sup>1</sup> But, with the exception of the pale morning light, which, however, does not seem to us particularly characteristic, no trace of this pathos is to be found in his landscapes. The outside world seemed to him, as to the miniaturists, only worthy of art as it was clean and fresh, unclouded, unstained; and so, if to

<sup>1</sup> Kugler, *Handbook of German and Flemish Schools*, i. 79.

tell a story he had to show a ruin, it must be dapper ruin. Landscape on such terms is robbed of half—and that the better half—of its power. With Van der Weyden, as with Van Eyck, though not to the same extent, there is luminousness. The eye revels in daylight, but there an end. There is extraordinary minuteness and variety, there is great extent of country, but there an end also. He has all the merits of the miniaturists, he has indeed been recognised as practising their art occasionally, but he does not excel them except as panel afforded him larger space. In landscape, with all his daylight, he is but a pale reflection of Van Eyck.

Yet Van der Weyden was a man of repute, far exceeding that of the Van Eycks, all over the Continent; in this there was probably something personal or accidental. It was through him, too, that Italy first became intimately acquainted with the Flemish style. The Duke of Ferrara had employed him, and in 1449 he started for Ferrara and Rome. There was something of the coarse and unideal in Ferrarese art, and Flemish realism was therefore congenial; but everywhere Van der Weyden was received with respect, and at Florence he painted for Cosmo de Medici the picture now in the Städel Museum, the landscape of which we have already noticed. Angelico was then at Rome; whether they met there is unknown, but the two do not seem to have much appreciated each other. One man only Van der Weyden certainly praised, and we are hardly prepared to find that Gentile da Fabriano was that one, though we may afterwards recall this curious link connecting the founder of the Venetian school with a chief ornament of the Flemish. On the whole, Van der Weyden seems to have been less influenced by the Italians than they were by him, at least in the matter of landscape.<sup>1</sup>

OUWATER is the name of a contemporary of Van der Weyden, but as his pictures cannot now be traced, he is only mentioned here because his works are said to have been remarkable for landscape, and he is even considered by some to have been one of the original founders of the Dutch school. Landscapes by him found their way

<sup>1</sup> A *Deposition* (664) in the National Gallery does not give a fair idea of Van der Weyden. It is a thinly-painted tempera picture, and Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle consider it to be by a German imitator. Still less does the large picture of the *Nativity* (35) in the Brussels Gallery answer to his merits. It is even there considered doubtful, and its landscape, feeble and formal to the last degree, condemns it more than anything else.

to Italy, if those once in the Grimani collection at Venice, and attributed to "Alberto d'Olanda," were by him. The dates of his birth and death are unknown, but he is said to have lived at Haarlem, where a picture in the town collection—a view of the city, clear and warm in colour—is attributed to him. He affords at least this one fact, that a reputation for landscape was already associated with these northern schools.

IN HANS MEMLINC, probably a pupil of Van der Weyden, we meet with a wonderful artist whose career is surrounded with mystery and romance. No one knows where he was born, nor where he died; his nationality is uncertain, and the touching story that he was found sick and wounded at the gate of the hospital of St. John in Bruges, and that he rewarded the care of the nuns with the exquisite work still to be seen there, is said to have no other foundation than that among episodes of charity portrayed on the capitals of painted pillars in that picture, a sick man is seen lying senseless in the street and carried on a stretcher to the hospital. Then as to his death, a "John the Fleming," who had been painting in a convent near Burgos in Spain, and died there in 1499, has been supposed to be none other than the famous Memlinc. The indefatigable researches, however, of Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle have brought to light that the trustees of his children appeared before a court in Bruges to register his death (where, they say not) in 1495. They show also that his name appears as contributing to a public loan at Bruges, and again that he paid ground-rent for two large houses in that city. They have learnt also the date of his wife's death, leaving him a widower with three young children. These are meagre data to reward diligent search, but they seem to imply that both in life and in death Memlinc belonged to Bruges.

Memlinc was possessed of perfect and delicate skill in miniature-work, as may be seen in the celebrated missal preserved in the Library of St. Mark at Venice, of which Lord Lindsay says: "The landscape is generally pleasing, with the beetling top-heavy rocks characteristic of the early northern painters, and from them imitated by the Italians." "Miniature-work" is descriptive of all his art, which delighted in covering a space relatively considerable, not with any one subject but with a whole history of events, each a picture in miniature and spread over a vast landscape, which again is not one landscape but fifty landscapes ingeniously interlocked like a map

puzzle, yet not without a carefully-managed perspective to a remote and high horizon. This was a style which came much into vogue, especially among the Flemings, who had besides, as we have seen, a curious fancy for great landscape distances. Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle trace this fashion of minute and complicated story to the wood-carvers, especially those of Tournai, whose multitudinous subjects were generally coloured; but, according to Lord Lindsay, the practice was originally Byzantine, and "had been introduced into Italy by the Sienese school, but, being less suited for fresco than for small easel paintings, it had never been adopted by the Giotteschi." Van Eyck, in his *Adoration of the Lamb*, made some use of it, and he also, we are told, painted a picture of the world under the aspect of an immense landscape, with an infinity of towns and villages spread over its surface; it was not, therefore, a very original fancy to fill such a landscape, representing the sacred land, with the scenes of the sacred story, as in the *Seven Joys of Mary* at Munich, and the *Seven Griefs* at Turin, two of the masterpieces of Memlinc.

The *Joys* consist of the glad, the peaceful, the triumphant incidents of the Saviour's life, from the birth and Epiphany in the foreground, to where, on the distant shore of the lake, and in the glow of the setting sun, the Lord shows Himself to His disciples in the boat; and where, close by, on a neighbouring hill, they are clustered in adoration of His ascending figure wreathed in cloud. To enumerate all the incidents would be to write a gospel; what concerns us is to observe the immense stretch of country with its curious isolated mountains upon the horizon, intended for those of Chaldea, upon each of which stands the solitary figure of a Magian king, watching for the star. In the midst is Jerusalem, a gorgeous city. So far it is all like a curious toy, made up of a great confusion of objects and figures. But there is a touch of true poetry, nevertheless, in the lake that loses itself upon the horizon in a wider sea of glory, and in the removal of the scenes which follow the Resurrection into that fair and halcyon region far aloof.

In the *Seven Griefs* at Turin there is still more of poetic feeling, and a greater unity of composition, while some of the landscape incidents are lovely. The entrance into Jerusalem, for instance, contains in the left-hand corner a perfect gem of scenery; admirable is the skill which has thrown the evil city, with its crowd of towers, into shade. The Calvary is such as might have suggested

the lines, "There's a green hill far away"; and beyond it the evening landscape, with the old towers of village and town reddened beneath a sinking sun, carries the thoughts towards the sorrowful burial, the silent garden, and the setting of the watch. These two pictures, but especially the last, are great epic stories, in which landscape plays a leading part.

But Memlinc's paintings upon the shrine of St. Ursula at Bruges, masterpieces of his art, and free from bird's-eye view difficulties, display also in the highest degree his excellence in landscape; they are remarkable, too, for their faithfulness to the



FIG. 58.—ALPINE SCENERY: MEMLING, BRUGES.

actual sites of his story (the legend of the Virgin Martyr), so far at least as the Rhine country is concerned. He has represented Cologne as only personal knowledge could have enabled him to do. Various still existing churches are perfectly recognisable, and especially the unfinished Dom, while, of curious interest to those who remember the crane on its truncated tower, there is at the foot of the building a crane of the singular shape common in that time, as old paintings show. But the scene at Basle gives us most of landscape (Fig. 58), and here the delicacy and truth with which a range of snow-capped mountains is depicted argues an acquaintance, if not with Basle itself, where no such mountains are actually in sight, yet certainly with Alpine scenery. These snowy ranges differ from those of John van Eyck in that they are not the

mere dots of light upon a wide horizon, which is the aspect of the Alps from fifty to a hundred miles away. Memlinc takes a nearer and more limited view, with less of pure snow, and where structure is visible. Here the lines of striation and of fracture are perfect, the light and shade and the aerial tints admirable, and no less so the faint overtopping snow-shapes, rising into a serene sky, illuminated only as by dawn upon the horizon, which rims with light a few wandering clouds. The nearer hills are diversified with woodland, the morning light throwing long shadows upon the "lawny" slopes.

FIG. 59.—THE BAPTISM : MEMLINC, BRUGES.

Another picture in the same hospital of St. John—a triptych containing *The Adoration of the Magi*—gives, besides a delightful view of old houses under a silvery sky, a perfect bit of coast-line, as it might be of Devonshire, for the humpy hills break abruptly into the sea exactly as in many a sequestered bay known to Mr. Hook. Only it is dead calm, the reflections fall deep and still, and the scene is almost certainly on the Meuse. The subject is the Baptism in the Jordan—John standing upon a sandy spit, while an angel upon the cliff holds the Saviour's vestments. (Fig. 59.)

Small and single subjects of this kind suited Memlinc best, and

of these many may be enumerated in which the landscape is excellent. At the Städel Museum, Frankfurt, are two small pictures: one a portrait, where the clear little distance shows a chateau and park very truthfully rendered. The other is a *St. Jerome*, where nothing could be better than the study of rock, done with miniature finish, and yet perfect harmony of tone. At the Uffizi is a *Virgin and Child* with angels; the landscape—sweet, careful, and low in tone—is lovely to look at, despite its greeny tint. In Rome the Doria Gallery contains amongst its chief treasures a *Deposition*, where, in a low long landscape, a distant lake and hills are poetically rendered, and carry the eye far away. The near trees are stiff and artificial, but the whole is rich in colour of the Van Eyck sort. No tragic gloom is attempted, but only a certain pathos.

Returning northwards, we have at the Louvre two panels, each with a small figure—*St. John the Baptist* and *The Magdalen*. These pictures of rich resplendent colour are well described as “jewels of delicate finish.” In the landscape portions there is clear water winding among hills, and towers that rise against the sky with poetic effect. But this character pervades all the work of this excellent miniaturist, whose colour and glow rival Van Eyck’s in quality. We may conclude our examples with two pictures in the National Gallery: *St. John the Baptist* with *St. Lawrence*, each figure having for background a very pleasant landscape. The trees are indeed blue-green and hard, but the idea of green glades, with paths that disappear into surrounding woods, is very pleasing; while the colour, as in the two little miniature landscapes seen through windows in *The Virgin and Christ Enthroned*, is brilliant and deep.

We must have attributed to Memlinc still higher powers in landscape, were there sufficient grounds for believing a *St. Christopher* in the cabinet collection of the Munich Gallery to be by him. But for the landscape’s sake, if for no other, we should doubt the assigned authorship, landscape being, we think, a very useful test of authenticity; each painter treats it after his own fashion, and betrays immediately the possession of a poetic gift if he has any. Now, though we have repeatedly noticed poetic feeling in portions of Memlinc’s subjects, the motive of this *St. Christopher* is entirely poetical, while the simplicity of treatment—for it consists of one single and impressive scene—is rather beyond Memlinc’s wont. (Fig. 60.) Across the darkening water, broken into waves, and flowing between high rocky banks, strides the



burdened giant, nearly knee-deep, and leaning strongly on his staff; behind him the water broadens, over it the sun is hanging low;

long lines of cloud, crimson and purple, impend above, and the sunny fiord spreads beneath, while a range of dark-blue mountains on the farther shore rests in the evening stillness. All this vista is charming. Near to the spectator on either side, the rocky banks, not in the least archaic, and tufted with wood, rise darkly; on one side lost in the gloom of cloud, on the other boldly defined against the golden light. Where dark trees crown the right-hand bluff is seen a solitary farmhouse; and leaning over a wattled hedge on the path that leads down to the accustomed ferry is the "Einsiedler," with his twinkling lantern.<sup>1</sup> In this picture, so full of truth and pathos, notwithstanding a certain stiffness, there is high landscape feeling—a feeling beyond Memlinc, as we believe. This conclusion is certainly strengthened if we compare this picture with one of the same subject undoubtedly by Memlinc in the Bruges Academy.

Fig. 60.—ST. CHRISTOPHER: STUERBOUDT,  
MUNICH.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Lindsay, supposing this picture to be by Memlinc, speaks of it as "an exquisite little picture, in which the eye, escaping from a narrow gorge of rocks, pursues the receding Rhine into broad moonlight, sleeping calm on the waters, and lighting up tower-crowned mountain and projecting promontory, one beyond the other, till lost in distance."—*Christian Art*, iii. 328. The suggestion of the Rhine is ingenious, but we cannot accept the moonlight in view of the crimson clouds.

A similar picture, but reported to be "incomparably better rendered," was at Holkar House, the Duke of Devonshire's,—attributed there to Dürer; it has also been assigned to Memlinc. It perished, unfortunately, in the fire.

In this latter the giant is seen emerging from a shallow pool, between most unreal rocks, piled up on either side as high as his head, with a pigmy hermit in a niche at one ear, and an incomprehensible piece of water level with the other. Memlinc here was probably hampered by a larger scale than suited him, which may account for the ludicrous perspective. But even in his loveliest miniatures he does not attempt a telling effect like the one at Munich. Take, for instance, his St. Christopher at Dresden, which is full of gay warm daylight, and with every object hard and gem-like—the shells bright and clean as from the shelves of a cabinet, not from a wave-washed shore. Memlinc here attempts no effect of wind nor anything of approaching night.

To whom, then, are we to assign this finely-imagined scene? Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle have no doubt that it is by DIERICK BOUTS, or STUERBOUDT, as he is more generally called. If so, it is significant that some report him to have been the son of a landscape painter, one Theodoric Bouts of Haarlem; and if born, as doubtfully asserted, about 1391, he was an earlier man than Memlinc. Stuerboudt died in 1475.

If this St. Christopher be by Stuerboudt, so also are two pictures in the same gallery, attributed to Memlinc. They are indeed part of the same triptych. The centre piece, an *Adoration of the Kings*, has an exquisite peep of landscape disclosed through a Venetian window; in the companion panel to St. Christopher, a *St. John the Baptist*, the extremest distance is lovely, displaying a far line of mountain, charming in its purity of form and colour. The rocks are carefully studied, with the patches of sward that crest them, and a particular tree is evidently taken from nature, the same being repeated in the centre picture. That faithfulness of this sort was characteristic of Stuerboudt is attested in a singular way by a statement (quoted by Kugler, i. 107) that in a picture at Haarlem "the environs of the city were given with such detail that even a well-known hollow tree then existing" (that is, nearly 200 years later) "could be identified."

Two wings of another picture—of which the centre piece, a *Last Supper*, is at Louvain—are also at Munich. In one of these, where the Israelites are collecting manna before sunrise, there is a real effect of very early dawn behind dark rocks. It is interesting that here Stuerboudt carefully adapts his landscape effect to the narrative. In the other picture, *Melchisedec and Abraham*,

the landscape has very little soul in any part, and the cushions of smooth sward in the foreground show the usual helplessness of early art. On the other hand, a third picture, *The Betrayal of Christ* (650), has a striking moonlight effect. Moonlight is again attempted in a *St. Christopher at Antwerp* (No. 29); there is no vivid effect, as in the same subject at Munich, but much feeling, in the low full moon, with streaks of coloured cloud over the watery vista.

Dierick Bouts, though he may have been born at Haarlem, lived at Louvain, where he was town painter, where he married, and occupied a house of his own. It was for the council-room in the town-hall that he painted his two most noted pictures, now in the museum at Brussels, representing the story of the Emperor Otho's perjured queen. The landscape of these pictures is commended by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle for its "soft clearness," and as "rendering with happy fidelity the hilly ranges that form the attraction of the valley of the Maes." Our notes, on the contrary, describe "a hard clear" edgy "landscape, bright and luminous, but without planes of distance, and without general light and shade." By "edgy" we mean that the trees and turfy slopes, instead of being rounded by shadow, are carried to a dark hard edge, a defect common to early art, but not, if we recollect rightly, obvious in Van Eyck. And as to the resemblance to the scenery of the Maes, though rock-detail was, as we believe, studied to a remarkable extent by Flemish painters from that valley, we fail to recognise those hilly ranges in this picture, where the landscape is made up of high pale bluffs crowded with a good deal of architecture. It is difficult, we must confess, to recognise the painter of the Munich *St. Christopher* in this cold ungainly piece.

Two more of Stuerboudt's pictures still remain in the church for which they were painted, that of *St. Pierre at Louvain*; one, the *Last Supper*, already referred to, contains no landscape; in the other, *The Martyrdom of St. Erasmus*, a hideous subject, the landscape is considered by Kugler "one of the finest examples of the master's hand;" that it was early held in general admiration is evident from the fact that a picture of the Cologne school, now at Munich, reproduces it.<sup>1</sup> The centre portion of this triptych is the least remarkable in its landscape; beyond a foreground of brown

<sup>1</sup> See Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *Flemish Painters*, i. 355.

rocks on either side, too carefully constructed and complicated, but faithful in detail, there opens a peaceful rolling country, with hedges and clumps of trees, and a small sheet of water. The left wing has nothing better, if so good, though it shows minute care. It is only in the right wing that the landscape justifies the praise bestowed, and it is that portion of it only which surrounds the head of the saint's standing figure. Here meadows in warm shadow, and enriched with a few clumps of trees, sink midway as if on purpose to disclose one of the smooth cols of an alpine region; such, surely, it must be, for peering up from depths beyond are mountain-forms

FIG. 61.—LANDSCAPE OF THE ST. ERASMUS, LOUVAIN.

lovely in the quiet dawn; every step would show us more of them could we but press onward to the summit! (Fig. 61.)

Berlin possesses, like Munich, a pair of wings belonging to the *Last Supper*. One of them, *Elijah in the Wilderness*, has a noticeable background; it is no wilderness indeed, but rather a rich park-like plain, beyond which again is a mountain range, the whole being wonderfully fine in tone, though a cold green in tint. The near rocks here, unlike those of the St. Christopher, are archaic; but a group of light trees on a crag is delightfully graceful and delicate in finish.

Kugler attributes to the figure portion of Stuerboudt's subjects "an expression of repose, solemnity, and a slight melancholy, which imparts a peculiar charm," while "in the arrangement of his subjects the sense of the picturesque predominates." Such qualities well agree with landscape backgrounds, which, according to the same

writer, "in their greater softness and depth of tone and slightly more developed aerial perspective, give him the highest place among his compeers"; and although no other picture that we know of supports the estimate we should form of Stuerboudt from the Munich St. Christopher, we may well accord to him an advanced position in the landscape of his time. If there be not the splendour and finish of John van Eyck and Memlinc, there is prevision of even higher things.

GERARD VAN DER MEIRE, a member of the Guild at Ghent, but whose date cannot be more exactly fixed than by saying he was contemporary with Memlinc, is one of those Flemish masters in whom we find the characteristic instinct for landscape, and the growing tendency to introduce a large proportion of scenery with the subject. But there was in Van der Meire more than this; he had a quite modern sense of the soft mysteries of foliage and of woodland solitudes. A small picture at Antwerp of a kneeling nun shows all this picturesqueness, but his singular qualities are more completely seen in a *Crucifixion*, with its attendant subjects, from the history of Moses, in a chapel of St. Bavon at Ghent. The central picture is remarkable for the wide amphitheatre of wild rocky mountains which surround Jerusalem, excellent in aerial perspective, and striking for their cast of light and shade. But it is in the left wing (Fig. 62), where Moses brings the stream from the rock to refresh the thirsting multitude, that we find again this startlingly modern feeling, though associated with a rocky foreground of careful detail, but utterly false combination; this we must take as the frame only, or the foil to the landscape, which shows a charming glade ascending amidst woods on either hand from a sequestered pool or stream, true in itself, though doubtless bearing no resemblance to the stream that cleft the parching desert. In this woodland vista may be recognised Van der Meire's usual graceful blending of umbrageous masses. But more remarkable—startling even to those who have explored the land of the dolomites—is the apparition above the forest, and catching the tender rosy light of dawn, of veritable dolomite peaks! no feature is omitted from base to pinnacle—the effects of shade, the effects of perspective, are perfectly given. The treatment of the base seen only at the one break in the woods is perhaps the best test of truth, for the "setting" of mountains was long neglected; here a dark spur comes in, as often in such scenes,

to help the setting.<sup>1</sup> This dolomite range, we have said, is illumined by the coming day, but in the corresponding panel, where the serpent-bitten people are pointed to the cure, an opposite effect is aimed at; against a vivid gleam, irradiating the under edges of a cloudy curtain, appears a serrated line of peaks of purple darkness, and potent in suggestion of Sinaitic terror.

Gerard van der Meire takes but a low place in art as a figure-

FIG. 62.—LANDSCAPE BY VAN DER MEIRE, GHENT.

painter, but we are inclined to assign to him a significant step in landscape.

GHEERARDT DAVID, who died in 1523, was, like Memlinc, a man of Bruges, though born at Oudewater in Holland. His landscape

<sup>1</sup> It will remind those who have seen it of the view of the Cimon Della Pala from the the plateau near Paneveggio. Lord Lindsay speaks incorrectly of snowy mountains in the distance.

has some noticeable qualities; if we may accept a picture at Munich bearing the name of Horenbaut, as in truth the work of Gheerardt,<sup>1</sup> he could display in its treatment much tenderness and delicacy. It is an *Adoration of the Kings*. The old houses of Bethlehem, Flemish enough, are painted with the quiet gray tints of Mulready; over a grassy hill a winding path disappears, a few trees sprinkled about are delicately pencilled; in the distance is a mountain of low hummocky shape, its sloping summit soft in its pure blues, and its craggy sides, truly modelled; wisps of cloud diversify a clear blue sky. The man who could paint this, though he might not possess the poetic insight of Stuerboudt or of Van der Meire, enjoyed the forms of landscape and its delicate aërial tints.

In the National Gallery is a picture (1045) of certain saints, with a rich background of foliage, the flaky leafage of the separate boughs well given, and the whole mass rich in colour. The sky—a deeply-toned blue-gray—and a distant hillside are full of sweetness, but the remarkable point is the understanding of foliage. At Berlin is a *Crucifixion*, with a wide blue landscape, distant hills peeping over long smooth slopes; it is the sort of scene he likes—the open, calm and soft. In this Berlin picture, however, he is very cold, and there is no light except a whiteness along the horizon.

The most important work extant of Gheerardt is *The Baptism of Christ* in the Gallery at Bruges. After reading that it contains “a splendid and highly tinted landscape,” the sight of it is disappointing. It is cold and hard, heavy and unreal, though with a great parade of reality. The trees are all straight stemmed, the rocks of quarry-like formality, the meadow of the darkest green. But the flaky foliage is elaborately painted; there is a sense of coolness and silence in the shady recesses of a dark wood, and we recognise again a quiet sky. Much more to be admired is the landscape in the *Flaying of the Unjust Judge* in the same gallery. Through a door, relieving the ghastly sight within, there glows a rich autumnal scene, where a round tower in brilliant light and a sandy bank are worthy of any Dutchman. Yet nothing of David’s, except it be the first-named Munich picture, to our mind, equals the landscape of two small upright drawings hanging near: the one is a *St. John Preaching*, the other a *Baptism*; this last is charming in its exquisite finish and sweet tints, suggesting that Gheerardt’s true vocation, at least in landscape, was miniature-work.

<sup>1</sup> See Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *Early Flemish Painters*, i. 309.

In all this Flemish art the landscape tendency, though not the landscape power, grows. JOACHIM PATENIER of Dinant, born therefore among scenery of unusual picturesqueness, follows Gheerardt, of whom he is said to have been a pupil, in planning a landscape with figures, rather than figures with landscape. For the character of his work we may notice first three pictures in the National Gallery—a *Crucifixion*, a *St. Christopher*, and a *St. John in Patmos*. In the first there is a finely-composed landscape, darkly blue, a stretch of champaign country, with towers, trees, and mountains, but the whole is opaque in colouring, without either transparency or glow. It is a wonder that the glory of Van Eyck should so soon have waned; but Flemish art, splendidly inaugurated, was now declining, and declining, it would seem, concurrently with that illuminating art to which we have traced its origin. A further fall may be observed in the *St. Christopher*, for if we compare Patenier's treatment with that of Bout's at Munich the inferiority in poetic feeling is marked. There is a wide arm of the sea, and the giant saint, just ankle deep, stands sticking in the mud midway between the shores; he evidently does not belong to his landscape, which is a great stretch of hills, with towns perched along the water's-edge. A better landscape is that of *St. John*, where the far, dark-blue hills and the crags, castle-crowned, and the gleams here and there of light among the deep greeny tones, form a picturesque and extensive scene. There is little to complain of till we come to *St. John* himself, floating in a sort of tub of an island, out of which grows a single tree.

At Vienna is a characteristic scene by Patenier, a *Baptism* (Belvedere, 48). It is a great wild landscape of heavy blues, with distant mountains against a faint light; a stream winds round the foot of a crag which shows some study of form, and a near bare stem cuts finely against the wan sky. The picturesque is evidently gaining in art, but the whole is airless and lustreless.

Yet one may be repelled too soon by this heavy airless look, by these stretches of country of leaden hue, these fantastic crags, which are almost sure to crop up in unnecessary places and objectionable variety. In No. 69 at the Belvedere a *St. Catherine* (called so, but it is all landscape), allowing for a queer rock or two, the eye may rest with unexpected pleasure upon a distant sea-line and a mountain range; there is, moreover, a captivating alternation of light and shade. So also at Berlin; while *The Rest of the Virgin* is



full of crags, blue or brown, and toy houses and bridges, the sky is clear and calm, with restful clouds worthy of a *Riposo*. Still more to be admired is (620) a *Temptation of St. Hubert*, where there is really fine distance, receding to sunny soft mountains—sunny for Patenier—and with only one strange peak to mar one's admiration. The sky, too, lies in long, soft, solemn bands, varying from delicate pink and primrose, to deeper tints. Madrid possesses six of the best specimens of Patenier, and there is a *Flight into Egypt* at Antwerp (where he seems to have lived), showing a careful distance of bay

FIG. 63.—FROM THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT: PATENIER, ANTWERP.

and far-off mountains, along with his favourite writhing rocks in the foreground. (Fig. 63.)

It will be observed that it is in the landscape of Patenier we have first had occasion to notice crags and peaks that are absolutely fantastic. Of course, there has been no study of nature for these, although rocks in the neighbourhood of Dinant may have started the foolish fancy to invent more and more startling surprises. Where this is the case, it is certain that a perception of the true beauty, impressiveness, and grandeur of the natural world has been wanting; there is a return to the artificial of Roman times; landscape in such a case has become only a scene to amuse, not to enjoy. Many

at this period, both of Flemings and Germans, fell into this abuse, and declared themselves thereby fallen from art.

One little fact will perhaps make Patenier more interesting to us than all his pictures: Albrecht Dürer, when at Antwerp in 1520, was present at his second marriage, and borrowed Patenier's oil colours, with a man to grind them. Patenier died in 1524, only three years afterwards, leaving two of his children—it links him with another name of note—to the care of Quentin Matsys.

As MATSYS illustrates an opposite tendency to that of these early Flemings, raising the figures into greater importance, and correspond-

FIG. 64.—FROM THE HOLY FAMILY, OF QUENTIN MATSYS.

ingly reducing the part of landscape, we only refer to him here to note that what he does give of landscape partakes of that preposterous style in rock and mountain of which Patenier is the chief example; but that his colouring, answering to that of his draperies, is far more luminous and delicate. In his two great pictures—*The Entombment*, at Antwerp, and *The Holy Family*, formerly at Louvain (the birthplace of the master), but now at the Brussels Gallery—we find both these qualities. In the latter picture is a characteristic specimen (Fig. 64) of the prevailing fantastic element, but there is a certain imposing spaciousness approaching to grandeur in the composition of this landscape, which is also conspicuous for a pervading sense of air and light. In a picture at the Stadel Museum, Frank-

fort, there is more than this. The finely-toned and poetic low light over a mountain distance suggests some perception of the romance of landscape.

Returning to the line of the landscapists there is HENRI DE BLES, a pupil and follower of Patenier, whose life lies uncertainly between the dates 1480 and 1550, and whose place of abode, whether mostly at Antwerp, Mechlin, or Liège, where he is said to have died, is equally a matter of conjecture. With him, as with Patenier, there is something very different from the gay precision and lustrous daylight of the Van Eyck and Van der Weyden manner. Here, in fact, as we said of Van der Meire, we have a hint of the modern manner. But, with certain new elements of truth, we are at once struck with its weakness. There is in De Bles the hazy indistinctness that belongs so much to northern landscape and modern art; there is the gray and cloudy day. There is also woodland touched with grace, but firmness, vigour, thoroughness, are wanting in almost all his work, and especially that unity which should reign supreme in a work of art. This, at least, is the impression produced by his most important pictures. At Brussels there is a *Temptation of St. Anthony*; the subject, like another at Dresden (a pedlar's wares plundered by monkeys) indicates the bizarre in taste, as indeed does his curious fancy of introducing an owl in all his pictures, whence his Italian name of "Civetta." In this Brussels picture there is a suggestion of vast distance—blue distance—but blue not with cerulean tints, but with the gray-blue of watery skies. A little church is set in a thoroughly rural bit, and the trees of the foreground are rather carefully studied, so as to render something of their freedom; but the whole is loose and crowded; every object is straining after the picturesque, and the general effect that of blue and greeny browns rubbed or smeared together. We miss entirely the transparent sunlit atmosphere; and there is no pathos of cloud or evening shadow to make up for the loss. (Fig. 65.)

At Munich an *Epiphany* is a blue complexity of things. In the National Gallery a *Crucifixion* has no composition, no light and shade; a cold white light pervades, and strange blue rocks are tilted about grotesquely. Again in *The Magdalen* there is seen through an archway a dark-blue sunless landscape.

But De Bles is capable of something very different. Among several small pictures of his at the Belvedere, Vienna, full of all

his faults, and especially marked by wild heaps of rocks fashioned out of the painter's fancy, there is a small *Flight into Egypt*, which, in certain respects, is simply admirable; a green mountain track climbing the steeps passes under two limestone crags;

FIG. 65.—FROM THE TEMPTATION OF ST. ANTHONY: H. DE BLES.

these are perfect studies from nature—the fissures, the lamination, the weathering, the varied gray and yellow tints, are wonderfully given; nor is it difficult to identify the scene so far as the rocks are concerned, when the traveller catches sight of the “Roche à Bayard” a mile above Dinant, and when he remembers,

too, that the master of De Bles, Patenier, came from Dinant, and that De Bles himself is said to have ended his days in the valley of the Meuse at Liège. That in the picture there is introduced, beyond these crags, a dark blue distance of sea and land, does not affect the probability. Altogether, one should call this a gem of landscape-art but for the want of light and air.

If, however, some of his pictures contain unexpected elements of excellence, still we can hardly say other than that the chief claim of De Bles to our notice consists in the fact that his style marks very distinctly the change to landscape proper which was rapidly coming on; and, we may add, in its singular forecast of Dutch grays and blues.

The same may be said of JAN MOSTAERT (1474–1555-6), who, though born and probably living at Haarlem, is associated more with Flemish than with Dutch art. There is fancifulness rather than poetry in most of his landscapes. His life of the Virgin in Nôtre Dame at Bruges is referred to as one of his chief works. It consists of several small subjects, the landscapes of which, dull and opaque in colour, show the influence of Patenier; but there are some taking little bits of lake scenery, still and dark, and here and there the eye lingers over a farmhouse embosomed in trees. At Brussels, in a subject from the life of St. Benoît, we find a landscape in which, while rocks are like separate stones fitted together, a young wood is rather prettily given, and the unreal archaic look of the grassy slopes is retrieved by the truth of the distant mountains. But with a citadel on a crag, an aqueduct and colonnades, there is as much architecture as could well be put in, and the pervading want of unity suggests that the scale was too large for the painter to manage. So again in the *Virgin and Child in a Garden* (National Gallery) there is a certain calm of twilight, but the woodland with its round masses of trees is heavy and dark. Berlin possesses one of his small pictures, a *Flight into Egypt* (621), of which the landscape is just a delicate little miniature, all greens and blues, receding into a luminous sky.

But, as with De Bles, we must go to Vienna to do justice to Mostaert—if, indeed, two small “rounds” in the Belvedere are by Jan, and not Frank Mostaert, a painter of the same date belonging to Antwerp. One of these pictures contains, in quiet grays and browns, a soft distant landscape, where a city and a bridge appear half-hidden, half-displayed, in alternate mist and gleam, a subject

wonderful for its date. The other, still more extraordinary for its time, has a moonlight effect, through a gap in heavy clouds, where a few stars twinkle; one bright ray falls upon a river, and transiently reveals fishing-stakes, boats, fishermen, and an old round tower. In the gloom which hangs upon the rest, a vessel under sail is dimly seen, and some trees are indicated—just the sort of vague suggestion that stirs the imagination to the quick. If Jan Mostaert could do this, a thing hard to believe, he lands us at once in landscape-art of a high character.

But with these successors of Van Eyck in general, while there is cleverness, readiness, and technical facility, there is little soul or purpose, and a total loss of the early splendour. They bring us indeed to landscape as a distinct subject for art, but it is with dwindling power and deadening tints. The great outburst of Flemish art which had attracted all eyes fritters itself away; a hundred years elapse before, with Rubens, born 1577, a new stream of energy, which had its fount beyond the Alps, visits the exhausted soil. We return now to Italy for the story of that art-culture to which there has been no equal.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE LANDSCAPE OF EARLY ITALIAN ART.

Duccio . . . . .	-1320 ?	Pesellino . . . . .	1423-1457.
Giovanni di Paolo . . . . .		Benozzo Gozzoli . . . . .	1424-1496.
Taddeo di Bartolo . . . . .	1362?-1422.	Piero Della Francesca . . . . .	1415 ?-
Giotto . . . . .	1276-1336.	Piero Pollaiuolo . . . . .	1443-
Jacopo Casentino . . . . .	1310?-1390.	Verrocchio . . . . .	1432-1488.
Fra Angelico . . . . .	1387-1455.	Ghirlandaio . . . . .	1449-1498 ?
Masaccio . . . . .	1402-1428.	Filippino Lippi . . . . .	1460 ?-1505.
Filippo Lippi . . . . .	1412-1469.	Cosimo Roselli . . . . .	1439-1506 ?
Uccello . . . . .	1396-1472 ?	Sandro Botticelli . . . . .	1447-1515.

WE left Italy a prey to all the powers of ruin, and comparing its condition during many mournful centuries with the apparent stability of the Byzantine empire, one might fancy, at first glance, that the elements of Roman greatness had really been transferred with the name to that which was intended to be the new Rome on the shores of the Bosphorus. But it was not so. There was a seething strength in the Italian race which was lacking in the degenerate Greek. Nay, the very barbarians had infused vigour. During 500 years, invasions, wave upon wave, had flooded the fair soil, but they gradually fertilised it; Theodoric with his Goths, the Lombards and their "Dukes" overran the northern plains; Charlemagne with his Franks marched to Rome; Otho the Great began the long infliction of German military power; the Normans raised a kingdom in the South. Two other movements were of native origin. The Bishop of Rome, become Pope and Prince, was making the seven hills again the seat of empire, an empire not the less potent that it was spiritual; and, more than all, the cities were asserting themselves:—Venice amidst its waters, Genoa on the Ligurian coast, Milan on the Sub-Alpine plain, Bologna at the foot of the Apennines, Pisa and Florence on the Arno, Siena on its lofty hill, and for a time, soon to end, even Gaeta, Naples, and Amalfi rose into republics. Every-

where the cities, armed behind their walls, were becoming centres of a life, which, if exercised at first in much fighting, was presently to find its noblest development in art.

As in the Northern regions, the first distinct evidences of this life of art appear in the thirteenth century. Earlier than that, during the long period from the ninth century to the thirteenth, whether we look at mosaics, wall-paintings, or miniatures, the rudeness of everything Italian is amazing. Where not rude we have only the feeble conventionalisms of Byzantium; or, as in the mosaics of Otranto (1163), subjects borrowed from Oriental carpets, and indulging in such monstrosities as trees whose boughs are crowded with animals, and whose roots rest upon elephants!

Where shall the revival of art-power find its field? Italian miniature-painting, as we have just said, had proved no exception to the general debasement; nor did renovation arise there. The miniatures showed no fresh motive; there was no formation of schools or of styles, as there was in the North, where Ireland, France, the Netherlands, Saxony, Bohemia, Franconia, had each developed something of its own. As to execution, even in the twelfth century it did not get beyond coarse outlines and rude colouring. Not till the fourteenth did Italian miniature-painting reach its proper standard, and then it was not in the leaves of MSS. that the growing art-power found its opportunity.

It is in mosaics of the thirteenth century that we discover symptoms of better omen. Rome had continued to be the seat of an indigenous mosaic art, though fallen for a long period into an imbecile condition; now the craftsmanship not only showed the skill of old tradition, but some new power in design; taking for examples the mosaics in the tribune of S. Clemente, and that of Sta. Maria in Trastevere (1291), there is evidence that antique art had inspired some dignity, while the East had imparted splendour. In one of the latest specimens of this Roman art, the work of Jacobus Torriti (for a name is here unexpectedly supplied to us) in the apse of Sta. Maria Maggiore (1295), we recognise something akin to the richness and grandeur of the best time, and a landscape of familiar character. Jordan, with a low brown bank for shore, flows with a fair attempt at waves; green grass above forms a level sward for the bare feet of the apostles, gigantic figures quite out of any possible relation to the tiny boats in full sail, and water-birds that float in the stream below. Yet there is no attempt at the spreading boughs and foliage



of an age like that of the Ravenna mosaics, nearer by many centuries to Roman antiquity.

But neither did the life of art lie among mosaics. Hard and glittering, that strange material offered no gracious field for its exercise. There remained the ample wall-spaces which Italy had preserved free from Gothic narrowness of proportion and the intrusion of Gothic ornament; and there remained, to turn these spaces into pictures, the resources of fresco, with its broad and sweet tints, and the richer hues of tempera, that viscid sort of body-colour used by the Romans. Presently arose the men who with these resources showed what art could do both on wall and panel.

It was the cities that called them forth, and first and foremost those of Tuscany, where it might seem that the old artistic Etruscan spirit, long buried in the dust of the tomb, had arisen to breathe the new air of municipal liberty. Cimabue (born 1240) claims for Florence the first place in this new era, but it is not to him that we turn for the earliest indications of landscape, though the new conditions offered an opportunity long denied.

DUCCIO of Siena (the first date at which he is mentioned is 1282) is not one whose reputation equals that of either Cimabue, who slightly preceded him, or of Giotto his contemporary; but we hold that, while superior to the former, he in some respects fairly excels the latter also.<sup>1</sup> He was of "vain" Siena, a city deserving from the proud Florentine a nobler designation, if only for its school of painting. Of this school it is interesting to notice that colour was a special characteristic, and that tempera on panel was more in vogue than fresco. These conditions favoured landscape, though with the heavy disadvantage at that time that, following the example of the miniaturists, backgrounds, or at least skies, were covered with gold leaf. But allowing for this, we think there are traces of an observation of natural scenery among the works of Duccio which we look for in vain in those of Giotto. The twenty-six famous scenes from the *Passion* by Duccio in the Duomo of Siena fill one with surprise, considering their early date, and show a power of composition, and of setting figures in a scene, which Giotto at Padua does not equal. Compare the sketch (Fig. 66) of Christ appearing

<sup>1</sup> These assertions I am glad to support by the authority of Dr. Woltmann—"Duccio surpasses all Italian painters of his time in his feeling for ideal beauty."—*History of Painting*, p. 431.

to Mary, with that (Fig. 68) taken from Giotto's *Life of S. Joachim*, and see how the figures, trees, and rocks of Duccio combine harmoniously together, while those of Giotto are scattered and formal; the trees too of Duccio, though queerly generalised, suggest something of the freedom of nature, which cannot be said of Giotto's.<sup>1</sup>

Another noticeable point in Duccio is his occasional adoption of a low horizon, as in a representation of the *Miraculous Draught* in the sacristy of the Duomo, where the Lord is depicted standing upon a piece of natural-looking rock. Nor is it without significance that in another of these small pictures (belonging, like the *Passion*, to the great altar-piece he painted there) columns are shown dark at top, and light below towards an invisible horizon. These things indicate observation of picturesque effect, while the adoption of the low horizon is in striking contrast to the map-like method of representing landscape which we shall find prevailing afterwards for long periods, and in all schools.

In later works of the Sienese painters we may observe perhaps in a predilection for tracts of wilderness and wild rocky landscapes the influence of the desolate scenery immediately

FIG. 66.—CHRIST APPEARING TO MARY :  
DUCCIO, SIENA.

FIG. 67.—ROCKS OF GIOVANNI DI PAOLO, SIENA.

<sup>1</sup> Another instance of Duccio's trees and rocks composing a scene is found in *The Burial of the Virgin*, of which there is a sketch in Messrs. Woltmann and Woermann's *History of Painting*.

south of Siena. There are several panel-pictures in the Siena Academy which have this character. Among them is one by GIOVANNI DI PAOLO, who paints a Magdalen surrounded by rocks and an extensive landscape, a great blue plain bounded by blue hills, and in the foreground a sanctuary among fantastic—we may call them sprouting—rocks, with a few cypresses to deck their forlorn recesses. (Fig. 67.) We give this for its bearing upon the curious subject of mediæval rock-painting, to which we shall presently come.

TADDEO DI BARTOLO (1362?-1422) has among his scenes from the *Life of the Virgin* in the chapel of the Palazzo Pubblico a view of Siena itself, crowning with its many towers a dark hill. Here, notwithstanding the unhappy gold ground for sky, the hills rise with some naturalness and a sombre depth of colour, which suggests the umber tints of a Siena autumnal landscape.

But while showing, more than others of higher name, a certain perception of landscape, the Siena painters—and it is characteristic of all their art—made no progress. They stuck fast amidst their conventionalisms, and were hard and dark and stiff, while Florentine art was making great strides. A panel-picture in the Academy by a certain Sano di Pietro, shows the poorest and most formal of landscapes around a St. Christopher fording the stream, and this at the end of the fifteenth century, long after Masaccio had shown hills as they are, in wonderful contrast to the humps and hillocks that satisfied Sano.

We must turn now to the great name that stands at the head of thirteenth-century art. GIOTTO (1276-1336), near Florence, sixteen years later it is supposed than Duccio at Siena, filled a far larger sphere. He travelled much; he left works at Rome on the one side, and at Padua on the other; he was the friend of Dante; he exercised an influence over his time compared with which that of Duccio was small and provincial; but he has left only a faint trace of his footsteps in landscape. It is in human character and story, or in the world of human emotion, that his genius found its scope. In dramatic or touching incident he is full of a nature that makes all kin. In allegory he is rich in thought, dignified and simple in rendering.

But in all this, landscape has slight place; of which perhaps one explanation may be found in the architectural, and consequently

severe cast of his composition; perhaps also as much in his preference for a pale ideal system of colour suitable to his sculptural style. His people are real to admiration, but they live for the most part in no real world, they tread no homely scene. This, no doubt, was in conformity with the usual conceptions of his age; and though, sitting as a boy in the fields drawing a sheep upon a tile, he may have first caught the eye of Cimabue, his soul had no affinity with such homely surroundings, but dwelt by preference among devout imaginings. Yet Dante, greater still, did, as we have seen, work up this world's landscape with the stuff of his dreams;

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FIG. 68.—TREES AND ROCKS OF GIOTTO, PADUA.

shall we say that the poet had more of the painter in him, while the painter had more of the poet? Certain it is that the great renovator of art seems to have taken none of his inspiration, very little even of accessory, from natural scenery. Giotto, the shepherd lad, preferred mystic architecture and angel forms floating in air; while Dante, the city noble, loved the forest and the stream, and met his Beatrice in a meadow.

Let us look once more, however, at the design from the life of Joachim in the Arena Chapel. (Fig. 68.) There is this advantage over Duccio, that the sky is not gold, but blue, a tint of which Giotto was very fond; but his colour-feeling goes no farther, his blue

is without gradation, rocks and figures are of the same pale sepia tint, and the trees of a dull olive green. Passing by for the present the curious screen of rock, we may notice in his favour the symmetrical, and yet ingeniously varied arrangement of the trees. Three stand out their full length, though only one shows root; three show themselves but partially, and at varying altitudes from behind the rocky platform; one is in shadow, the others more or less in light; and instead of the straight stiff stems of the MSS. they all here bend and lean. These are so far evidences of an eye for the picturesque, and of a real study of nature; for as Giotto looked out upon his native landscape he might see something very like those single-stem trees with bunchy tops, growing out of ridges brown and arid. That herbage and flowers are, when introduced, painted by Giotto with great care, is another sign of advance; and Mr. Ruskin has noticed that at Avignon he has rendered "the breakers of the sea on a steep shore" with much truth.<sup>1</sup> Of such a feat his Byzantine predecessors were certainly wholly incapable; in the same eleventh-century MS. from which we have already given specimens of trees that may be compared with Giotto's, waves are represented by helpless perpendicular curves. Sometimes too, like Duccio, Giotto designedly aids his composition by landscape, as in the *Raising of Lazarus*, where the rock of the tomb, crowned with trees, rises behind the awful form of the living dead.

So we will gladly admit that the man who saw much in human gesture that art had not seen before, saw also something in landscape which art had long lost sight of, though we cannot agree with Boccaccio when he affirmed of Giotto that "nothing was ever created that he did not reproduce, so as not merely to imitate but to appear nature itself"; but Boccaccio, as we have seen, had little care for landscape himself.

If we mention next a painter of the school of Giotto, and a native of the same Florentine hills, JACOPO CASENTINO (*circa* 1310 ?—1390), it is because in our National Gallery a small predella picture of *St. John in Patmos*, where the Apostle lies wrapt in vision on the top of a mountain, shows we think a glimpse of true landscape feeling in the brown platform of rock, carefully gradated in aerial perspective, in the colouring, coarse though it be, and especi-

<sup>1</sup> I much regret that I have not had opportunity of examining this remarkable performance.

ally in the long dark sea-line beyond, over which a low light hovers. Here is something more than Giotto felt, or mayhap even looked at.

We come now to the sweet soul that dwelt at Fiesole. FRA ANGELICO (1387-1455) looked out upon the glorious vale through which the Arno wanders; he saw it, but he saw it not; he looked upon a glory that excelleth, he saw "thrones, and them that sat thereon," he saw the quires of angels, and the adoring saints. But he had to descend to earth sometimes; his Lord had died there, and there had found a tomb, and to judge the world his Lord would come again. So in the great *Deposition* in the Academy at Florence there is landscape,—on the one side Jerusalem, on the other the rocky hills which would supply the sepulchre with its door of stone.

Let us note first, what we so often have to note among these early painters, that there is no sympathy between the scene and the subject. In the foreground are men and women burdened with a great grief; in the centre the sacred wounded form lifted from the cross of death; but behind all this are a bright sky, hills soft and gay, and a spick-and-span Jerusalem as if newly done up for the occasion! What! had he never seen sadness in nature, when the rain-cloud from the Apennines blotted out the brightness?—when the sun went down, when the moon stepped forth "pale with weariness"? Stranger still, did he not know that at that dread time "there was darkness over all the earth unto the ninth hour"? Of course he did, but neither to him nor to many others did it occur to put this into art, or perhaps with him the sacred mystery was a thing to behold only in a sacred peace with which the fair scene accorded. Or it might be that he fixed his gaze so much upon the celestial glory that it would be scarcely possible for him to soil his brush with the dull tints of earth, even when depicting what happened upon earth.

This brightness, however, and lack of shade is characteristic, as we have said, of others besides Angelico. It belonged to all this early art. Shadow was evidently thought of as a defect, an unhappy accident of nature, or fatally significant of evil. They took only so much, therefore, as was absolutely necessary to define each particular object, be it face, figure, building, or hill, but they would never dream of smirching their fine colours with any general stretch of shadow. So the sky always shines, trees sparkle, hills are cut out of porcelain,

and Jerusalem (as in this case) is gay with red tiles, and white walls that have never seen a dark day. Landscape, it is plain, could never fulfil its mission under such a strange conception.

But we must notice a certain advance in the Angelico upon the Giotto landscape. It is full of objects; it retires to a far horizon,—hills receding one behind the other; it is studded with trees of various sorts, among which appear the cypress and the orange or pomegranate of his own familiar landscape, though it must be confessed that Angelico's trees are always straight-stemmed, perpendicular, and standing clear and still; for which purpose the male cypress, with its bare stem, suited him best. Nevertheless he paints a real landscape, which it can scarcely be said Giotto ever did; but then there was nearly a hundred years between them, and centuries go for something. Yet, if real in comparison with Giotto, it was far less real than what Van Eyck was even then producing beyond the Alps, to whose achievements throughout all this stage of Italian art one constantly reverts with wonder.

Some of the most interesting of Angelico's landscapes are the little simple bits,—just a hill, with a cypress, walls, and a few towers here and there, which occur in his smaller pictures: in these too he often shows a decided feeling for a stretch of wide and distant mountainous country, as in the *Flight into Egypt*. At the Florence Academy also there is a *Madonna and Child with Saints*, in which distant mountains and a dark sea appear between the stems of a cypress grove; this implies more sense of the picturesque than Angelico's usual work suggests. More readily he paints a sweet and pearly dawn, as in the extraordinary mystic landscape which accompanies the small *Pietà* at Munich, where the gentle saint of a painter could not find in his heart to make the rock of the tomb where Christ's fair body was to lie other than snow-white.

When we speak, moreover, of the unsympathetic character of his crucifixion-landscape we must remember in qualification that of his frequently repeated *Last Judgment*. There a ghastly mountain shape on the side of the damned (mountains being generally during these ages, though not perhaps with Dante, cursed places) catches an ominous light upon its flank; while on the other side, where angels and the risen saints walk lovingly hand in hand to heaven, golden-tasselled trees bend over them, and golden-tufted grass, enamelled with flowers, salutes their feet. Such was paradise as this good man fancied it, and the golden rays pouring from the

celestial gate would have delighted Bunyan. The finest thought, however, is the solemn dawn of the great *Last Day*, a dawning that shimmers into the dark sky, above the rows of opening graves. We may be amused at the accurate mason-work of these grave-pits, and their rigorous order, but Angelico here painted a cemetery as he knew it.

A word now about his rocks, which have a very long pedigree. Similar forms occur at Ravenna, and belong in the main to the

FIG. 69.—LANDSCAPE OF THE "DEPOSITION": FRA ANGELICO.

rocks of all early mediæval art. Giotto has them in the S. Joachim, Duccio in his small scenes of the Passion. Perhaps we ought hardly to class with them the extravagant shapes found in the panel by Giovanni di Paolo of Siena. (Fig. 67.) A specimen of Angelico's treatment may be seen in the *Deposition* (Fig. 69), and another, but of a different sort, where one would not expect it, in the *Sermon on the Mount* at San Marco. In the latter, one would think, it might have pleased the gentle recluse to depict the green grass of the narrative, but instead, there are odd sliced slopes of



rock, not unlike fractured flint. There must have been some study of natural objects for rock patterns, and Mr. Ruskin (*Modern Painters*, iii. 246) argues that the Giotto rock, and all early mediæval rock, exactly answers to what both Homer and Dante meant by "cut rocks." They had observed "the concave smoothness of certain rock fractures as eminently distinctive of rock from earth, and used the term 'cut' or 'sculptured' to distinguish the smooth surface from the knotty or sandy one;" so that, as he says, the rocks of mediæval art look as if "hewn out with an adze."

This is very true of much mediæval rock: it is true of Angelico's

rock of the *Sermon*; but perhaps the best illustration of this curious characteristic is to be found in the terrible landscape of the *Triumph of Death* at Pisa, attributed to the Sienese painter Pietro Lorenzetti. (Fig. 70.) Apparently in these solemn scenes nothing but rock meets the eye, the trees themselves are rooted in impossible rock, the object being, we may suppose, to repre-

FIG. 70.—ROCKS FROM THE TRIUMPH OF DEATH: LORENZETTI, PISA.

sent the wilderness inhabited only by monks, or only penetrated by huntsmen. This pitiless rock is adzed all over, but there are some striking repetitions both of the mosaic forms of the rock of the Baptistery at Ravenna (Fig. 27), and of the Byzantine curiosities of step and column. Pietro probably spent all his thought—burdened with the stern moral of his teaching—upon his groups of horror-stricken mortals, and allowed his rock to follow old familiar types.

But, as we have said, the rock of Angelico's *Deposition* is of a different type; it is similar to that of Giotto, and Mr. Ruskin's acute suggestion does not, we think, sufficiently explain its formation. This kind of rock usually shows a level or sloping platform at top, from which, round the edge in sinuous windings, the crag is sliced away. This suggests that its authors had in mind rather those hardened banks of soil which hem in rivers at certain places, or perhaps the cliffs of a sea-beach—more likely, however, the former, for they would be close at hand. It would follow from this that the original of these "rocks" would be, in fact, not pure rock—

that is to say, not actual stone, and a reference to the Giotto subject already referred to supports this opinion. The formation of the singular tower-like form on the right might easily be that of an isolated crag in a stream, with a bit of the green turf of the mainland on its summit. Still less does the tongue of land which carries the trees justify the incongruous idea of stone. One may be almost sure that this also was a grassy crag from which trees *could* grow. Duccio's cliffs, more complicated, and with a fallen fragment behind the Christ, are of much the same character. In Angelico's there is some difference; they are harder-looking and less natural, though they look water-worn; they are probably intended for real rock, but have more the look of a landslip. Angelico has most likely taken accepted forms, and when we remember that he was a monk we may judge that he found these in the illuminated MSS. with which he was familiar, especially as he has stuck little trees up and down exactly in the style of much French and Flemish illumination of the fifteenth century.

Something like the same forms run wild may account for the "sprouting rocks" of Paolo. (Fig. 67.) But here it is possible to suspect another origin. We have quoted Mr. Freshfield's suggestion that Dante's "craggs are limestone with dolomite characteristics,"<sup>1</sup> and may it not be so here? With some absurd exaggerations in parts, the prevailing character of these curious writhing pinnacles is very dolomitic, and the little step at the foot of one of them is also like what is often seen in pure dolomite, though not in the same situation. Where the Sienese may have seen dolomite is not so easy to say, though it is found, we believe, not so very far off among the mountains of Carrara.

We have spoken of Angelico's cypresses—the male cypress, with its tall bare stem, which he affects. His *Flight into Egypt* shows it well, and there is one in our sketch from the *Deposition*. This tree is unfailing in all Italian pictures of the time. It was certainly, for one thing, a tree very easy to paint, nothing easier than to draw a pole with a green brush at top. But more likely the motive lay in its being not only the decorative tree of every ordered pleasaunce, but also the tree of all sanctuaries and convent-gardens. It was the tree not only of polite culture, but it had pious associations, and was, therefore, specially suitable for all sacred subjects. Lord Lindsay remarks upon the introduction by Lorenzetti in his picture

<sup>1</sup> See chap. iii. p. 36, note.

of the *Fathers in the Desert* of "the doûm tree, a Theban palm which he must have copied from some Coptic painting, as the tree does not grow in Lower Egypt." There might have been here an intention to suggest the famous Eremite Natron valley; but palms as well as cypresses were favourite trees with the early painters, who liked, we may believe, to show their knowledge and taste in resorting to the rare and ornamental. A common tree of wild forest growth would have seemed unfitting, vulgar, to these men of refinement and religious ecstasy—at least on this side the Alps, as the shadow of a cloud would have spoilt their golden dream. It proves how far they were from appreciating the true spirit of landscape. But there was one at hand who would read nature better.

Among the portraits of painters at the Uffizi is to be seen the head of a young man—a lad you might almost call him. He looks a strange, melancholy, unkempt sort of being, with lips slightly parted, features tremulous, eyes abstracted in their gaze. He would not, one might fancy, give much answer if you spoke to him. The portrait would interest you if you knew nothing of the young fellow and his dark fate; but you will stand and look long when you know that this is poor "slovenly Tom"—Tommasaccio, or, as he is known among the immortals—MASACCIO! (1402-1428).

As for this portrait it is true that experts now suppose it to be the work and the likeness of Filippino Lippi; but if ever internal evidence supported tradition it surely does so in this instance. No face could better answer to our thought of the strange genius who, after revolutionising art, perished at the age of twenty-six. The portrait once labelled "Masaccio" in the National Gallery<sup>1</sup> is evidently the same countenance, but with a very different expression—it is a bright moment with him. Both likenesses, it may be remarked, bear a certain resemblance to Shelley, especially as Mrs. Leigh Hunt modelled him with pouting mouth and wide-open eyes. That figure in the *Tribute Money* which Vasari, and after him Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, believe to have represented the painter, has power indeed, but by no means answers to the forlorn, solitary, and precocious creature he seems to have been. "He loved solitude and the confinement of his room," says Vasari, "and cared as little for himself as for the world in general." It was not by reason of a wild or jovial life that such an one was always sadly in debt, and

<sup>1</sup> Now called a Florentine work of the fifteenth century.

had to pawn his things at the "Lion" and the "Cow"; but that he was thinking, thinking—always thinking—and lived in a world of his own. The muscular and prosperous figure of the fresco—a man, too, several years older than Masaccio was at his death—lived clearly in the world we all know too well.

Masaccio, whose real name was Guidi, and his birthplace Castel S. Giovanni, in the upper valley of the Arno, stands at the head of what Vasari in his day rightly called the "modern" style of art, which may be held to mean a style combining close observation of nature with a capacious generalisation. It was a great stride like that of the art of Giotto—nay, in art-qualities it was a still greater stride. Giotto had introduced simplicity, dignity, dramatic and touching action; Masaccio added to these grandeur of pose, good drawing, acquaintance with the nude, perspective, shadow, atmosphere—reality. What he did showed always the conception and execution of the true artist. He treated his subject as a whole, not in disjointed parts; and shadow was with him a great element of effect. We see at once how such gifts applied to landscape would make a very different thing of it from what had ever been done before, and so it comes to pass that in the background of the *Tribute Money*, one of the famous frescos of the Brancacci chapel at Florence, we find (as Mr. Ruskin tells us) "the first mountain naturalism"—a phrase entirely true with respect to Italian art, but which, remembering the charm of Van Eyck's mountains in the *Holy Warriors*, can only be accepted with the explanation added that it is the first "expression of the rounded contours and large slopes of hills, and the association of their summits with the clouds."

The landscape part of this great work, painted, not like the rest in fresco, but in tempera, is in rapid decay. The sketch engraved (Fig. 71<sup>1</sup>) was taken under exceptional illumination for the purposes of a photographer, and few will ever see again as much of what is fast disappearing altogether. It is just possible still to recognise some of its rare qualities. In the first place there is *reality*. Some day he lifted up his eyes upon—shall we say?—the Pisan hills,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This record differs from Mr. Ruskin's, in *Modern Painters*, which was taken from an engraving. The most important variation is, that where he puts a dark mountain I could see only dark sky, so that the outline of the hills is entirely altered as well as the effect of the white fleecy clouds. A small building on the right escaped my notice, or has been obliterated.

<sup>2</sup> He is said to have visited Pisa to paint an altar-piece.

**Fig. 71.—LANDSCAPE OF THE TRIBUTE MONEY: MASACCIO.**

and saw in them what he wanted for the picture in hand, one of the last of his short course. He took record of their rounded summits, their soft folds and solemn repose. He saw how their tops were lost here and there under streaks of cloud—fleecy masses quite unlike either the isolated slips or the round white lumps others had painted. He saw how paths struck across the flanks of the hills; how bushes climbed up from below; how a lonely tower would catch the light; how gloom would settle under a heavier wreath of cloud resting upon the highest summit. In front of all this he saw trees of free forest growth whose branches and slight

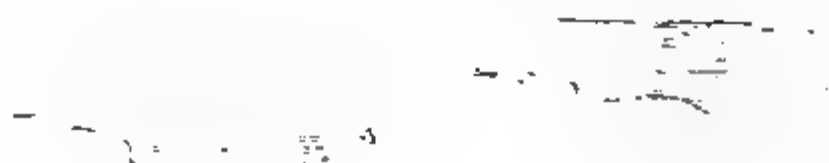


FIG. 72.—LANDSCAPE AT S. CLEMENTE, ROME: MASACCIO.

foliage yielded freely to the breeze. He saw how, in comparison with objects in the foreground, atmosphere softened and blended the receding landscape. He saw all this and he gave it as he saw it, with an eye that perceived also its poetical significance. Nothing is more remarkable in Masaccio than his appreciation of the lonely hills. They are introduced in every landscape he painted, and never as fantastic shapes, never as blue porcelain, but in the dignity, simplicity, and solemn tones of nature.

In his earliest known works at S. Clemente in Rome, painted when he was but eighteen, there is landscape, all of the same solemn mountain sort, and admirably composed with clouds. Fig. 72 is part of a landscape seen through the window of the room in which St. Catharine disputes with the philosophers; how well that solitary building crowns the height!—and in the crucifixion in the

same chapel there is shown in the background a wide stretch of country—hills successively sloping to the sea—and, above, a large expanse of soft gray cloudy sky. There are other specimens also besides that of the *Tribute Money* in the Brancacci chapel. In the *Baptism*, where the young man stands naked and chilly at the edge of the water waiting his turn, there are solemn gray hills in the background—real hills; and in the fresco of *Peter and John giving Alms* a solitary castellated building stands, as Mrs. Radcliffe might have described it, among lofty hills gloomy at their base, but whose summits are pale in the pure morning. In the *Peter Preaching* there is what Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle well describe as “a massive and simple landscape of hills.” It consists of three stern and rocky masses ranged in excellent perspective, and clear against a quiet sky. Where shall we find the like in art for many a long day?<sup>1</sup>

Nor must we omit another note of his wonderful naturalness. Art in Italy had hitherto been content with houses of toy-box size, where the figures could more easily step over the roofs than walk in at the doors, but Masaccio's architecture is not only good and simple, but always drawn to a scale that will suit his people; his houses are such as they can get into, while he treats an “unlovely street” with a play of tender light and shade upon the tall houses that shows how perfectly he apprehends the poetry of reality. Well may Dr. Woermann support Vasari in saying of Masaccio that he “stands at the head of the whole of modern pictorial art.” He asserts this on the ground that all the great painters of Central Italy down to Raphael himself worked and studied in the Brancacci chapel. They seem not to have taken much note of his landscape, but to us it appears certain that here also he stands at the head of all modern landscape-art, distinguished from Van Eyck by his perception that there is something besides sunshine in nature, something besides endless detail; that there are expressive and solemn moods for those who can apprehend them, a feeling distinctively modern. Slight as his landscape may be, it is a new thing;<sup>2</sup> there is that in

<sup>1</sup> I have not seen a fresco discovered in the Carmine cloister and claimed by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle as Masaccio's; they speak of “a church and a landscape of hills in the distance massively depicted in tempera,” vol. i. p. 542.

<sup>2</sup> Leonardo da Vinci, after citing Giotto as a student of nature, writes: “Afterwards art declined again because every one imitated the pictures that were already done; thus it went on from century to century until Tomaso of Florence, nicknamed Masaccio, showed by his perfect works how those who take for their standard any one but nature, the mistress of all masters, weary themselves in vain.”—*Richter*, i. 332.

it which heralds the far-off stately tread of Titian, and Titian led the way for all succeeding art in landscape.

Leaving what promised to be his finest fresco in the Brancacci chapel incomplete, Masaccio disappeared, and an inexplicable mystery shrouds his end. "Said to have died in Rome," writes some one on a tax-return that the lost painter should have signed himself. Was it poison, as some of those days thought? was it the poniard? No one knows, but it seems probable that this rare genius was just put away somewhere like a dead dog!

Masaccio did not appear absolutely without precursor, though, looking at the works of his contemporary, Angelico, one might think so. In Masolino, said to have been his master, but who like Angelico outlived him, there is seen something of that perception which made Masaccio great. This is not surprising; genius does not descend quite suddenly out of the clouds; it is born among conditions of earth, but it is surprising that in landscape the inspiration of Masaccio died with him for so long a time.

Especially remarkable is it that FRA FILIPPO LIPPI (1412-1469)—educated in the Carmine Convent, and the admiring student of Masaccio at the very time he was painting in the Brancacci close by, of whom, too, Vasari said that the very spirit of Masaccio seemed to have entered into his body—should have imbibed so little of his master's genius for landscape.

Of this there is convincing proof in Filippo's picture of the Nativity (Louvre). We cannot believe that Masaccio would ever have built up those stones so elaborately into an artificial ruin, nor that the queer archaic landscape could ever have been learned of him. The distance alone in this picture is natural; it is calm and sweet, but not of the Brancacci type, while the rest is all and everything, put together without air, gradation, or composition. In the Berlin picture, where the Mother adores the Child in a "secluded landscape," which Dr. Woermann describes as "lovingly worked out," there are strange olive-green slabs of stone one upon another, with straight-stemmed fir-trees, altogether much more northern than Italian, and very unlike the broad and simple solemnity of Masaccio. There is also the *Madonna and Child* of the Uffizi (carefully engraved in the Dohme series of *Early Teutonic and Italian Masters*), on one side of which appears a formal garden, on the other rocks that could only have been studied from paving-stones



set upright. The "spirit of Masaccio" must have deserted Lippi when he painted this.

Then there is P. UCCELLO, who, though born six years before Masaccio, lived for fifty years after his death. He shows in the *Battle of St. Egidio*, now in the National Gallery, and admired by Mr. Ruskin for its hedge of roses, a strange brown landscape, intended indeed to represent the terraces under cultivation common upon Italian hillsides, but which in his hands look as if they had been cut out of wood. Yet Uccello deserves mention, because by advancing the scientific knowledge of perspective he no doubt aided the progress of landscape, though he was more occupied with problems of foreshortening than with the rules of perspective appertaining to scenery, and aerial perspective he entirely neglected.

PESELLINO again (1423-1457) may be compared in his landscape with Masaccio. Two of his works may be quoted for this purpose. The first is the procession of the Magi on their way to the Adoration, in which knights and servants, falconers and dogs—a regular cavalcade of the day—are seen passing through a rich country. It is a dark-green and hard landscape, and to say this is to show sufficiently how the example of Masaccio had been lost upon him. But there is tone and care, as in the minute study of leafage in the trees; and though there is no aerial perspective, a sweet glow is given in the sky, while the evident pleasure in introducing animals prepares the way for more attention to landscape as a subject. It is in fact a "genre" picture, and the near relations of "genre" to landscape have already been noticed. This picture is in the Uffizi.

The other may be seen in our National Gallery. It is a Trinità, in which are introduced dark-brown hillsides, patched with vegetation—patched without the slightest attempt at picturesque or aerial effect, but, as in the Uffizi picture, there is a light in the sky which promises better things. Pesellino died early, and, it should be remarked, was one of the pioneers of oil-painting in Italy. With him, however, that medium which in Flemish hands already bestowed so much depth and glow of colour, through imperfect knowledge and subsequent thickening probably caused much of that deadness and dulness of which we complain.

But in BENOZZO GOZZOLI, a pupil of Angelico (1424-1496), who

achieved a great reputation in landscape, we may see more than in any one else how much beyond his time had been the landscape of Masaccio. We should have expected something better than we find from one of whom it could be written that "of all the Italians he is precisely the painter who seems to have been first smitten with the beauty of the natural world and its various appearances."<sup>1</sup> Yet when the same writer goes on to say that Gozzoli was "the first to create rich landscape backgrounds, with cities, villas, and trees; with rivers and richly-cultivated valleys; with bold rocks," etc.; and further, that "he enlivens his landscape most agreeably with animals of all kinds, dogs, hares, deer, and large and small birds, which are introduced wherever there is room," one perceives that after all it is not "the beauty of the natural world" so much as the lively life to which it may be made subservient, by which Gozzoli captivated his contemporaries.

One of his earlier works is also one of his best; this is the procession of the Magi in the Riccardi Palace at Florence. It is characteristic that he chooses a subject, after the example of Pesellino (recently dead), in which all the "pride of life" could be displayed, as kings, knights, and pages sumptuous in dress and accoutrement, attended by hunters and followers of all kinds, "wind their solemn way through a rich landscape country." One may be quite sure that, with Gozzoli, such a country would be "rich" like the people—rich not in beauty but in objects!

In his better known frescos of the Pisan Campo Santo there is only endless repetition of the same wearisome "properties"—wearisome, however gay and varied. There is abundance of landscape feature, put together Chinese fashion, heaped up to near the top of the picture; the rocks as archaic in shape as ever; trees of every kind, including of course the palm, are all straight as a dart, and stuck in wherever there "is room." There are parterres, gardens, hedges, no end of fanciful combinations and gorgeous architecture mixed up with it all. But there is no air, no simplicity in the perspective, no general cast of light and shade, no unity—except that of predominating greenness. Let us be just, however; there is a feeling for distance in the vast variegated plain lost among blue hills that he is fond of introducing to lead away the eye, and the effect of which is helped by the immense amount of detail upon the mid-distance, where the nearer hillsides seamed with hedges,

<sup>1</sup> Kugler, i. 236.

clustered over with bushes, are decked with villas, castles, and small towns. He liked all these things, but he could not blend them into a landscape. He could give to them nothing of the beauty, mystery, and unity of nature—a unity which in a quiet hiding of her power she accomplishes even among the most incongruous of human things. Gozzoli could do little else than jumble them all together, and delight

FIG. 73.—FROM THE CAMPO SANTO PISA : BENOZZO GOZZOLI.

in the confusion he had made. This is not landscape, and, so far as Gozzoli (who outlived him by sixty-eight years) is concerned, Masaccio had lived his short life in vain. (Fig. 73.)

We have been occupied since leaving Siena entirely with Florentines, upon whom rests undoubtedly the chief glory of fifteenth-century art; but the man to whom, after Masaccio, the next advance in landscape belongs, was not of Florence, though it appears that in the Brancacci chapel he obtained his first insight into the great

principles of art, and especially into that charm of atmosphere which became his chief contribution to Italian landscape.

This was PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA, an Umbrian, born at Borgo S. Sepolcro near Arezzo about 1415, and it is not till lately that his merits have been recognised; now he is asserted to be the "theoretico-practical guiding-star of Renaissance painting in general,"<sup>1</sup> while it is remembered that in his own time he was called "a very king of painters." But this was more by his teaching than by his works. He strove to regulate all he did by exact knowledge, and the extent and profundity of this drew the admiration and enforced the respect of his contemporaries. In several directions both his teaching and practice had an important bearing upon landscape. In the first place, he demonstrated the principles of true linear perspective as had not been done before, and this especially with reference to the precise position of different objects in a scene. Still more valuable was his reduction of aërial perspective to a science. He took infinite pains to give to each tint "its proper local depth in exact proportion to distance, so as to arrive at an elaborate certainty in rendering atmosphere."<sup>2</sup> This is the distinctive merit we have already claimed for him. We are told, indeed, that "he endeavoured, more particularly by a careful blending of gray tints, to reproduce the atmosphere itself in its harmonising effects upon objects." Again, he gave much attention to the effect of light in "the proper projection of shadows" and the general distribution of light and shade. And, finally, he greatly improved the vehicles used in the new processes of oil, so as to approach the purity and brilliance of the Flemish discoverers.

These are all very remarkable achievements, and it would appear from them that something of what Masaccio struck out by genius, this man, who lived to a great age, worked out by science, thus establishing principles for the guidance of the great opening age of art. Occasionally too, like Masaccio, he produced what was far in advance of his time. In one of his frescos at Arezzo—the vision of an angel to Constantine in his tent—there is so admirable an effect of light and shade and colour that, to quote Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, "No one can wonder at the design for this fresco

<sup>1</sup> Article by R. Vischer on Signorelli in *Early Teutonic Italian and French Masters*.

<sup>2</sup> Crowe and Cavalcaselle, ii. 528, 529.

being taken for one by Giorgione. It might have been assigned with equal propriety to Correggio or to Rembrandt!"<sup>1</sup>

Turning to the actual landscape work of this accomplished man one meets with some disappointment, and especially if we make our first acquaintance with him at our National Gallery, in his picture of the *Baptism*. It has, indeed, suffered much from abrasion, but it is hard to believe that the strange patchy hillside of bush, herbage, and bare soil, with the little town out of all proportion at the foot, is by this master of perspective both linear and aërial.<sup>2</sup> The only merits which can be readily recognised are the sky of pleasant soft-toned grays, the trees of careful leafage, and the reflections of landscape and figures in the shallow limpid stream. The figures themselves are white ghosts, but they have died the death of cleaning.

Much more satisfactory is the landscape belonging to the portraits of the Duke and Duchess of Urbino at the Uffizi. Here we meet with a soft vastness of sunny distance that justifies the fame of his atmosphere. It includes a bright space of water and a gray-walled town, but the nearer portion, dotted with trees and plotted into fields, is sadly too like a map. At the back of each picture there is still more of landscape, with again a great expanse of distance, charmingly harmonious, and as to aërial perspective quite wonderful. But the hills are spread like diminishing molehills up to the horizon; they are not formed into ranges; they possess no organic unity; there is neither the reality nor the poetry of Masaccio's hills except in the one matter of atmosphere. The perfection, however, of his workmanship is shown in the white horses painted in front of a brilliant sheet of water, and yet perfectly relieved. The nearer scene is, as usual, speckled with trees, but

<sup>1</sup> I have not seen this fresco, but an acute observer writes:—"The fresco at Arezzo is wonderfully modern, but the criticism of Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle is, I think, superficial. There is a man in armour (Giorgione); a candle-light effect (Rembrandt); but these are accidentals. It is a vigorous effort at a dramatic representation of night, to be compared, if compared at all, to Raphael's *Delivery of St. Peter at the Vatican*."

<sup>2</sup> The resemblance between the landscapes of Piero and those of Uccello has led Dr. Richter (*Italian Art in the National Gallery*) to suggest that Piero was the pupil of Uccello, and he goes on to say that "the peculiar construction of these landscapes with steep mountains of an uncommon type is the more remarkable because they are the starting-point of all later achievements in realistic landscape-painting." Dr. Richter must surely have forgotten at the moment the far finer realism of Masaccio in landscape, from which Francesca might have learnt more than it appears he did when "he studied art in Florence." May it not be possible, however, that "the foreshortened view of a street" in the *Baptism* was suggested to Piero by the example in the Brancacci chapel?

they are rendered with delicate sweet tones of gray,—such, in fact, as will be recognised in the actual Arno landscape of to-day, as from the windows of the Gallery on the bridge one looks out upon the lovely outdoor spectacle. It is very evident, too, from these landscapes that, in addition to his other acquirements, the possession of the oil secret had done much for Piero. Piero della Francesca stands at the head of that great stream of Umbrian art which culminated in Raphael. His immediate pupils were Luca Signorelli and Perugino; but it will be more convenient to postpone dealing with these till we have seen some of the renowned Florentine painters in the Sistine, where Ghirlandaio, Botticelli, Cosimo Roselli, Signorelli, and Perugino can be compared together in their great frescos upon those famous walls.

Returning to Florence, we find in PIERO POLLAIUOLO (for to him and not to Antonio is now assigned the pictorial part of their united labours) one who, along with others, “owed much to the example of Francesca.”<sup>1</sup> In the matter of landscape this is particularly noticeable. At Turin, in *Tobit and the Angel*, there is a vast landscape raised to a high horizon, that unfortunate characteristic of imperfect art, but showing excellent perspective in the flat plain,—the rich yellow plain,—through which there winds a river very glowing in colour, and gay with a city and a castle on its banks. The trees and bushes with which the plain is speckled are elaborately distanced, as Francesca might have done. So also that clear glowing stream points to an advantage which may have been derived from him, for it is surely owing to the improved use of the new oil or varnish medium which again enabled Pollaiuolo to produce in a picture, now at the Uffizi, a sky rivalling in purity and depth that of the Van Eycks and the Venetians. So far so good; but in this Turin picture, and not there alone—it is too characteristic of the time—we have a foreground all hard and odd-looking with its pebbles, tufts of weeds, and flowers. Were not this so frequent a feature we might have supposed that the metal-worker Antonio might have had a hand in it.

Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle speak of the Turin landscape as having something of the “mysterious twilight about it which Verrocchio gave to his unfinished *Baptism of Christ*, the clear forerunner of that melancholy but soft landscape, with its ideal laby-

<sup>1</sup> See Crowe and Cavalcaselle, ii. 526.

rinths of hills and valleys, and wandering streamlets which charm in Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*." "Thus," they go on to say, "we find in Pollaiuolo the spring from which the students of pure light and shade, as distinguished from the colourists, arose, and we trace a direct descent from them to the perfection of Leonardo da Vinci." This is high praise. Perhaps some of the "twilight" may be due to the brown bituminous pigments used, especially in the backgrounds, by Pollaiuolo, for the whole cast of the thing is unlike the genuine, the noble melancholy of Masaccio.

At Berlin, in a picture of the Annunciation, there are brown and singular, but very vivid, bits of landscape, seen through two small windows. One of them is a view of Florence, in which much mastery of linear perspective is shown. The other looks up the valley of the Arno, the hills, as now, covered with villas. There is much sparkle of light in these glimpses of scenery, and evidently great faithfulness of delineation. The Duomo and Giotto's tower are both introduced. Small as these window-peeps are, they are charming.

In the National Gallery some specimens of Pollaiuolo's landscape may be seen. His *St. Sebastian* much resembles the Turin picture in its high horizon and extensive landscape, in which the far hills subside into the plain with much good detail. The great view full of complexity, with its river and dark groves, is indeed all very carefully defined, wanting only light and air. In *Tobias and the Angel*,<sup>1</sup> on the contrary, there is a landscape vivid in its gray-greens, and depth of light in sky and water, though with no relief in the middle distance. In the *Virgin adoring the Infant Christ*, again, there is a delightful landscape so far as distance is concerned. Pollaiuolo is one among many of these early painters who, once shown the way, are never tired of expatiating over distances, though in his case the experts tell us not with much expense of labour, for he painted such effects in "a bold effective scenic way" and "all at one sitting."<sup>2</sup>

The name of that noble worker in bronze, VERROCCHIO (1432-1488), has already come upon our page fitly associated with his friends and fellow-workers the Pollaiuoli. It so happens that his only authenticated picture contains a landscape of peculiar charm,

<sup>1</sup> The character of the landscape tends, I think, to support the doubts raised as to the authorship of this picture, see Richter's *Italian Art*.

<sup>2</sup> Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, ii. 394.



and he is thus brought again within our jurisdiction. The subject of this sole record of Verrocchio's use of the brush is the *Baptism of Christ*, in the Academy at Florence; it is famous, however, less for its own merits than for the very likely tradition that one lovely figure of an angel was painted by his great pupil Leonardo. It is indeed at first sight but a hard brown picture; yet, as you look at it, there is disclosed an unsuspected and most sweet vista of landscape, very modern in treatment. A road in true perspective—for that was one of Verrocchio's masteries—stretches right away amidst scattered trees to a green hill; beyond which again there rise soft, blue, and delicately-drawn mountains, surrounding the head of a calm lake and bathed in an atmosphere in which perhaps may be traced the teaching of Francesca. The foreground shows the usual imperfection of all early treatment, for the near rocks are hard brown blocks and sawn slabs of stone—hard as the material into which he drove his chisel—and the trees are round, dark, and stiff. Let us be content with what we have, the distance alone should satisfy us, and, let us add, the manner in which the whole conception of the landscape supports the sentiment of the subject—the baptism of the Holy One in the wilderness stream. A critic has well described it as “the mixture of the mysteries of solitude and worship.”<sup>1</sup>

We have come amongst a generation of metal-workers, for the next great painter to be dealt with sprang also from them.

There died about the same time as Benozzo Gozzoli a much younger man than he and a much abler; this was GHIRLANDAIO (1449-1498?). Born nearly fifty years after Masaccio's death, he knew well the value of Masaccio's work, and studied in the Carmine to excellent profit. But Ghirlandaio, the son of a jeweller, whose taste for solid and enduring work led him when comparing painting with mosaic to exclaim that “the first was fleeting, the latter eternal,” was not likely to appreciate the soft mountain forms and vapoury distances of Masaccio; his admiration was confined to the grand arrangement, dignity, and reality of his figures. Nor is it without interest that Ghirlandaio reached his greatness by slow degrees, carving it out painfully, as it were, from obdurate if precious material, while the youthful Masaccio seems but to have breathed shapes of beauty upon the wall.

We must look, therefore, for Ghirlandaio's excellences in the

<sup>1</sup> Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, ii. 408.



simplicity and spaciousness of his general composition, in his nobly designed figures, elaborate modelling, and brilliant finish. Two, however, of the qualities enumerated find their scope in his scenic backgrounds—spaciousness and finish; and to these we may add a good knowledge of perspective, which, combined with his severe and simple taste, enabled him to introduce architecture with great dignity and effect.

The chief examples to which we may refer are, in the first place, that view of Pisa which Mr. Ruskin has copied from Lasinio, and which supplies an interesting comparison with the *Tribute Money* landscape of Masaccio. There is just the difference—all the difference—between feeling and no feeling, the representation of the mere object under prosaic daylight, and the same invested as it is in the power of nature to invest, and of art to imitate, with sympathetic mystery and grace. In Ghirlandaio the mountains, modelled certainly with care, rise into a hard dead sky. In Masaccio they touch and mingle with the films of cloud. In the Pisa subject trees and bushes take a set and formal place; in the *Tribute Money* they stand in careless groups and wave in the gentle air. A castle in Masaccio's *Baptism* catches misty light amidst the mountain gloom; a distant fortress of Ghirlandaio stands like a wooden model, smooth and stiff, unblended with the landscape.

His fresco in the Sistine of the *Calling of Peter and Andrew* (Fig. 74) gives a better specimen of his landscape power in the far-receding lake, the mountains that rise precipitously on the one hand, the large slope of country on the other. Here is that spaciousness of which we have spoken, and excellent perspective, while the groups of trees on the crag to the right are admirable in their grace, their freedom, and yet solid masses. They are perhaps the earliest specimens of natural treatment. Nevertheless there is a singular coldness in the scene. The lake is a formal zigzag vista, beset by innumerable points of promontories, and the idea of mountains is that of pyramidal masses in a receding row. There is a certain still beauty in the sky, streaked with a few clouds, but the water is cut up with patches of shade from point to point of promontory, till the sense of a calm expanse is lost. Of the rocks, very sharply defined, we shall speak presently.

So far we have looked only at Ghirlandaio's frescos; his panel-pictures will better show his powers in this direction, and we will begin with that most brilliant landscape, bright as a Van Eyck, in

the church of the Innocenti at Florence. Here one is also reminded of the Flemings, in the long water perspective, which, unlike the Sistine fresco, is full of air and light; the hills, still too tent-like, are softly blue, and very delicately defined. There is a bridge, a town, a clear white and almost cloudless sky, and the water below is gay with vessels. Next we have a noted specimen in the *Adoration of the Magi* at the Florence Academy. Here again we find a bright glowing distant landscape, clear and shining as if made of china. The blue hills are of jewel brilliance, the nearer ones of a bronze

FIG. 74.—LANDSCAPE BY GHIRLANDAIO: SISTINE CHAPEL.

brightness dotted over with round bush-like trees whose leaves are golden. A winding stream is one flame of lustrous opal light; the meadow-land, of a smooth vivid golden green, soft as fine moss; and amidst paradisaical sward on the left is the winding road coming from afar, along which the wise men have travelled. This road emerges upon a curious terrace, smooth as a garden-walk, artificial as any garden-terrace, and supported by rocks of minutely studied stratification. This terrace, Mr. Ruskin tells us, answers pretty well to Dante's idea of terraces on the Purgatorial mountain. It may be true to Purgatory, but it certainly does not belong to earth except as a "made" road.

But in estimating Ghirlandaio we must take into account some

less elaborate things. In a picture in the Uffizi, the *Adoration of the Magi*, is a clear bright view of Venice in excellent perspective, and with the Euganean hills in the distance; Mr. Ruskin speaks of this as showing "a keen though prosaic sense of nature." In his *Madonna and Child in Glory* at Berlin (No. 88) there is a clear little vision of a lake shore with blue mountains beyond, and in the *Judith* (No. 21), where there is a steep sea-coast, the distant sunny mountains are of a tender gray; while, if the *Virgin Enthroned* in the sacristy of the Duomo at Lucca be, as Vasari says, by him, the predella is worth looking at for its rich deeply-toned landscape, with dark peaked mountains reposing in a low twilight of exquisite gradation. At Munich, which possesses the centre portion of the Berlin picture (No. 557), there is another of his soft distances.

Upon the whole we find in Ghirlandaio something new in Italian art, or at least something more pronounced—something which is not Masaccio, nor yet Francesca, nor yet Pollaiuolo! Is it, then, the influence of the Flemish masters, the Van Eycks, or Van der

Weyden, who had, as we know, been for some time admired in Italy? Their lustre and precision, their jewel colours, would exactly suit the taste of one who had worked in a goldsmith's shop, and whose finish was remarkable. But with all its undeniable beauty it is beauty of a very limited range, and unworthy of the assiduous student of Masaccio.

FIG. 75.—ROCKS BY GHIRLANDAIO, STA.  
MARIA NOVELLA.

It remains to discuss the rocks of Ghirlandaio, which are of a type distinct from those of Giotto, Angelico, and the Sienese, and in which again may be traced, we think, and as Lord Lindsay supposes,<sup>1</sup> a Flemish origin. They are real rocks, but oddly put together, and repeated without variation wherever rocks are wanted. They appear in the Sistine fresco, and in the sketch (Fig. 75) from the fresco of John preaching in the wilderness at S. Maria Novella, and are very

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Art*, iii. 318.

closely rendered in Mr. Ruskin's engraving of the terrace-path (*Modern Painters*, iii. Pl. 10, Fig. 5). It is clear, we think, that these rocks were not invented; they were not like older examples, vague conventional reminiscences, but, whether suggested by Flemish originals or not, Ghirlandaio studied them from nature, or rather such nature as may be found in a quarry. This we take to be the key to the rock-drawing of a long succeeding period of art. These careful painters strolled out to the first convenient quarry beyond the city walls, and brought home studies sufficient for no end of pictures. Ghirlandaio was fond of perpendicular slabs, or strata; but others, as Filippino Lippi in his picture at the Badia (Florence), preferred the tabular look of a different formation, and this was perhaps the more usual of the two.

A second point characteristic of Ghirlandaio's rock is the smooth round cushiony turf which caps it. This also pervades a wide region of art, north as well as south of the Alps, and is not without authority in nature, especially in nature such as these men saw her, never far from human habitation, where the grass was always shaven smooth. The sketch from the Novella fresco, evidently of a quarry, perfectly illustrates this curious feature, and there the trees, except for their straight thin stems, are natural enough, as are the scattered stones which he had seen somewhere, and noted in his sketch-book.

We have mentioned FILIPPINO LIPPI, and may slightly anticipate his date (1460?-1505) to notice his landscape, already referred to, in the *St. Bernard* of the Badia. (Fig. 76.) Vasari speaks of it as "much admired," but it was so for a curious mixture of things, "rocks, books, and vegetation." The remark shows that admiration for a certain petty realism which is very common in the popular mind. The piles of books, and the pages of the open folio, are done with Dutch precision, and the slabs above, also singularly like a heap of old volumes thrown together, are painted with careful attention to every crack; but the whole, though full of picturesqueness in detail, wants the simplicity and unity of nature; picturesqueness there is everywhere,—in the trees with

FIG. 76.—ROCKS IN THE ST. BERNARD  
OF FILIPPINO LIPPI.

light gleaming between their stems, in the green vale closed by a green hill; but here again the want of air betrays the lack of Masaccio's larger view of things. Yet, as we know, Filippino, chosen to complete Masaccio's work in the Brancacci, did so worthily enough so far as the figures were concerned; yet with respect to one of the best of his subjects, *The Crucifixion of St. Peter*, Messrs Crowe and Cavalcaselle make this just remark: "The landscape, more minutely defined (than Masaccio's) has likewise less depth and atmosphere."

The *Virgin and St. Dominic*, National Gallery (293), is still less favourable to Filippino's reputation in landscape; it is all hard, heavy, and instead of the freedom of foliage we have the dark masses of trees simply frizzled out at the edges. No better is the scenery of the *Adoration of the Magi* (1124), in which the piled-up brown rocks, and the elaborate adjustment of block and slab are curiously reminiscent of the vast rock-arch in the Palestrina picture, witnessing perhaps to the perpetuity of a peculiar taste in the Italian mind.<sup>1</sup>

No less than four of the eight great wall-frescos in the Sistine Chapel are by COSIMO ROSELLI (1439-1506 or later); the bad taste of a pope, Sixtus IV., is the only explanation offered for the predominance in this sanctuary of Art of so poor a painter. Yet he appears to show a certain feeling for landscape, perhaps the most so in the episodes to the *Last Supper*, the *Agony*, the *Betrayal*, and the *Crucifixion*, solemn scenes which in other respects we must regret should have been committed to him. The episodes, however, seem to indicate in the landscape accessories some perception of the pathos of nature. The *Garden* has no meretricious ornament, and in its simplicity is almost worthy of that great sorrow. In the *Betrayal* a slender tree rises against a pale sky; he forgets indeed that it was a winter night, or perhaps he could not venture upon that innovation in art. In the *Crucifixion* there is a natural darkening of the sky above, with a reflection of its remaining light in the stream below.

Roselli has besides—if we may really credit him with this landscape-work—more notion of grouping and massing trees than many of his time, and in this entirely excels Benozzo Gozzoli, with whom

<sup>1</sup> Morelli thus refers to the landscapes of Filippino: "While Botticelli's landscapes are, so to speak, ideal, with pointed cliffs and steep river-banks, Filippino's landscape-backgrounds are rather realistic. He usually represents the hilly and woody sceneries of Tuscany; they are more directly taken from nature and darker in colour than those of his master Botticelli."

some suppose he was in the habit of working. In the *Sermon on the Mount*, his best fresco, there is foliage which strikingly shows this superiority, and the landscape is composed in a large and simple way which Benozzo would never have consented to. But now comes the question, Is this landscape Roselli's at all? Vasari says that his scholar Piero di Cosimo painted it, and looking at the utter feebleness of Roselli's work in general, and the miserable landscape of the two other frescos bearing his name in this chapel—*Moses receiving the Law*, and the *Destruction in the Red Sea*—one must needs suspect that this is the truth, and that any excellence found in his landscape must be due to the younger man, who, as we shall presently see, reached some reputation in this line. As for the last-named fresco of Roselli, it is so utterly devoid of poetical feeling, or of any kind of unity,—its details, as in the pyramidal spires of rock, are so wretchedly meaningless,—that one turns away saying: "This man who, to please a pope, could smarten up his figures with gilding,—this man had not soul enough for anything!"

It is a relief to come to a man of real genius, who not only executed three of the frescos of the Sistine, but, according to Vasari, had the general superintendence of the whole—SANDRO BOTTICELLI (1447-1515). A contemporary and rival, but a survivor of Ghirlandaio, whose fame he seems at one time to have eclipsed, Botticelli was of a very different spirit. The monumental dignity of the one contrasts with the impassioned action of the other; sedate history with wild fancy; severe and classic drawing with a homely mannerism; clear and glowing colour with tints cold, confused, and often dull. Botticelli had in him much of the mystic, and we are not surprised to hear that he was an ardent votary of Savonarola, and a commentator and illustrator of Dante; but we should scarcely have expected that, along with this religious turn, he would be one of the first to wander into profane literature for subjects. But he loved allegory, subtle allusion, and suggestion. He could not see with the keen if prosaic perception of Ghirlandaio, but he saw visions which were beyond the other's ken.

From such a mind we should expect a certain feeling for landscape absent in the great Ghirlandaio; but it is not what we might have hoped. There is surely in his works a tantalising imperfection, as of a man who could not adequately express his ideas, or was always in a hurry. His two pictures—*The Birth of Venus*

(Uffizi) and his allegory of *Spring*, in the Florentine Academy—illustrate what we mean. But let us take first a description of the former:—"The sky gray as in early morning . . . the ripple of the sea in conventional curves; the golden light of dawn touches the edge of the shell, and the rushes of the foreground, and sparkles on the sea-shore" (S. and J. Horner). Or again, for this picture is famous:—"The light is cold, mere sunless dawn, but a later painter would have cloyed you with sunshine; and you can see the better for that quietness in the morning air each long promontory as it slopes down to the water's edge . . . an emblematical figure of the wind blows hard across the gray water, moving forward the dainty-lipped shell on which she sails; the sea 'showing his teeth,' as it moves in thin lines of foam, and sucking in one by one the falling roses, each severe in outline, plucked off short at the stalk, but embrowned a little, as Botticelli's flowers always are" (Pater).

All this might have been in the mind of Botticelli the poet, but is it fairly carried out by Botticelli the painter? That "cold dawn" is too like pale opaque paper-staining; that ripple is of the very rudest conventionality, to be excused only in a feeble Byzantine hand; it is composed of mere V's dabbed in white upon a dull surface; while the nearer waves are nothing but frills and furbelows, after the manner of MS. illumination; the trees again, which fill up much of the picture, are but lifeless upright poles with tufts of leaves at top, whose colour is a harmony of bronze. Are we not bound to see here, instead of the poetry of art, its real impotence? We may observe, however, that Botticelli likes to associate trees with his figures; he enjoys the suggestion of a wood, though it is always of the same sort of tree, singularly resembling that of the Flemish miniaturists, when they wanted to represent a forest. The best illustration of this is in the trees forming the central mass of the *Moses* at the Sistine (see Fig. 77); rising straight out of the ground, they fork into branches at a certain height exactly as in the miniaturists; but, with a decided feeling for the picturesque, a path beneath them winds up the shady slope—a very tempting path, where the light of a sweet sky glimmers from under the heavy foliage. Yes, we may be sure that Botticelli loved to wander along the dusk sylvan ways, and among the dim multitude of gray stems.

In the *Spring*, at the Florence Academy, trees are also an important feature. It is not the open meadow into which, led by the dancing Graces, Spring directs her steps; she treads the mazes



of a wood wherein every dark trunk and branch, every leaf and spray, is defined with individual care, and the sward beneath is spotted with flowers as with a pattern. All this reminds us that it was the Renaissance time, when the woodland took so large a place in allegory and romance, when the classic and the mediæval spirit—a spirit that had lost its early gladness—mingled so strangely. Botticelli, with all his antique lore, was unable to resist a melancholic glamour, by which this scene, intended to be classic, was effectually depleted of classic joy.<sup>1</sup>

But we must do more justice to Botticelli's colour. Though the two Florentine pictures referred to look in this respect like poor

FIG. 77.—TREES AND PATH: SANDRO BOTTICELLI, SISTINE.

wall-decoration, or scene-painting hastily got up (their singular fame has led to the length of our remarks), we may obtain a better impression by looking at the quiet bit of scenery—a winding stream, bushes, low hills, a small town on a crag, all in a low unobtrusive tone—all a sweet sad greenery—which fills up the distance in his "round" of the *Virgin and Infant Christ with Angels* at the Uffizi.

<sup>1</sup> I beg to refer the reader to the brilliant description of the two pictures in *Euphorion*, only known to me as these pages were going to press. Of the *Spring* the author says:—"We again have the antique goddesses and nymphs, whose clinging garments the gentle Botticelli has assuredly studied from some old statue of Agrippina or Faustina; but what strange livid tints are these beneath those draperies, what eccentric gestures are those of the nymphs, what a green ghost-like light illumines this garden of Venus!"



The same seductive half-mysterious sadness appears in the wonderful little picture of *Judith*, followed by her nurse, bearing the head of Holofernes, also at the Uffizi. This is a delicious picture every way: the figures Mantegnesque in their fine drawing and action; and the landscape—vague, sweet, and quiet, appropriate to breaking day—little more than a haze of greeny tones that mingle with a sky where formless flecks of cloud are wandering; the chill of the deed and the chill of the dawn finely accord. If the great Leonardo had this picture in mind when he wrote: "Shun, however, the mistake of Botticelli, who thinks that a sponge moistened with colours thrown at a panel will produce a landscape at a stroke," we do not agree with him; yet we are otherwise at a loss to find, in Botticelli's usually hard metallic style, any foundation for this criticism. Far less sympathetic and interesting is an elaborate landscape at Turin, where across the foreground moves a strange allegorical procession, amidst which Cupid sits bound upon a car drawn by two unicorns. A large walled city, presumably Florence, lies behind; and outside the walls, bushes and trees are scattered in clusters; all is dark, rich, and brown; and the foliage, worked to a pattern like heads of cauliflower, and touched with bronze, looks metallic. We cannot recognise here Botticelli's prevailing weird melancholy of colour, touch, and form. Nor are those characteristics shown in Mr. Leyland's four subjects from the *Decameron*,<sup>1</sup> where the sky and water are very luminous, and the distant cerulean hills shine through an opaline atmosphere. Everything is hard and bright. But the pine trees, perfectly upright, and set like posts unrooted in the ground, are curiously characteristic of this unequal painter. How he could imitate the bark so carefully, and not the tree, is amazing. In the *Moses* of the Sistine he hides the roots as if distasteful to him.

More pleasing is *Venus reclining with Cupids* (916) in the National Gallery; the landscape of green hills, softly toned and charmingly gradated, with graceful single-stemmed trees pleasantly disposed, the far hills melting in the soft lustrous atmosphere, and a bright stream meandering through the strath, suggest a charming land to wander in. The landscape of the *Assumption of the Virgin* in the same Gallery is remarkable more for containing a wide-spread view of the valley of the Arno, with Florence in the midst, than for anything else. Yet there is something grateful to the eye in the soft haze that wraps the receding hills on either side.

<sup>1</sup> Exhibited at Burlington House in the winter of 1880.

The tendency to melancholy which we may sometimes detect in Botticelli's landscapes, and always in his strange, elongated, wistful female faces, is perhaps also shown in what we take to be a peculiarity in his time—the introduction of Roman ruins. His fresco in the Sistine—*The Destruction of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram*—derives great dignity as a composition from this certainly incongruous element. In the midst rises the arch of Constantine, with the broken and displaced coping-stones faithfully delineated. Farther away to the right is a roofless ruined building of Roman architecture, lifting its forlorn, broken, and empty arches in the air. There is a feeling in this entirely distinct from that which prompted Fra Filippo, for instance, and innumerable others, to paint the elaborate ruined walls which surround the *Nativity*. And Botticelli, when he takes this subject, as in the *Adoration of the Magi* (Uffizi, 1286), does not put in ruins in the usual way, but shows ruined marble arches in the distance—surely a Roman reminiscence?

But, on the whole, we cannot say that Botticelli left that mark upon landscape we might have expected from so original a genius. One wishes that this "Passionate Pilgrim" had noticed more the rack of clouds, the life of trees—had seen more than he did in nature of true and noble pathos; he seems to have apprehended something of it in a Roman ruin, and to have divined it in the countenance of Giuliano de Medici's mistress—poor lovely Simonetta; but there is only unwholesome sadness in his landscape tints.

We have here reached a halting-place, and can begin the next chapter with one of the greatest names that art has known.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE LANDSCAPE OF ITALIAN ART IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

Leonardo da Vinci	. 1452-1519.	Lorenzo Costa	. 1460-1536.
Lorenzo di Credi	. 1458 ?-1536.	Amico Aspertini	. 1474-1552.
Piero di Cosimo	. 1460-1521.	Pinturicchio	. 1454-1513.
Bernardino Luini	. 1470 ?-1530.	Bernardino Fungai	. 1460-1516.
Beltraffio	. 1467-1516.	Ant. de Bazzi	} 1480 ?-1549.
Pietro Perugino	. 1446-1522.	(Il Sodoma)	
Luca Signorelli	. 1441 ?-1524.	Fra Bartolommeo	. 1476-1517.
Francia	. 1450-1517.	Mariotto Albertinelli	. 1474-1515.
Andrea del Sarto . 1487-1531.			

MR. RUSKIN, surveying the whole range of Italian landscape-art from Giotto to Titian, classes it in three divisions, which he names respectively "the Giottesque, Leonardesque, and Titianesque." Yet LEONARDO DA VINCI (1452-1519) did not inaugurate, so far as his pictures are concerned, any new era in landscape; he struck out no such new reading of nature as did Masaccio; he was not the first to work out principles which afterwards took large effect like Piero della Francesca. It is because Leonardo's is the greatest name in the age of "drawing,"—or, as Mr. Ruskin defines it, "the perfect rendering of forms whether in sculpture or painting,"—that he is chosen to give his name to a period, and it is not at once apparent what in Mr. Ruskin's view constituted his special relation to landscape, which was only indirectly influenced by that general diffusion of scientific drawing in which Leonardo took so excellent a part.

If, however, we turn to the *Treatise on Painting* and other works in manuscript left by Leonardo, we find that his marvellous powers were very particularly applied to the study of landscape; so closely, indeed, that one might have expected him to prove before all things a great landscape painter. Yet his attention seems only to have been devoted to landscape as part of the vast circle of phenomena connected with visible things which was always

occupying his mind—a mind that covered with its investigations so large a field that mortal life was not sufficient to allow a tithe of his ideas to be developed in practice; well might Vasari confess that Leonardo “laboured much more by his word than in fact, or by deed.”

Yet his “words,” in almost illegible handwriting, and great confusion of arrangement, could not have been of much avail for the art of his time, since the portion of them first printed did not appear till some hundred and thirty years after his death, so that while the amazing prevision they reveal of the study proper to landscape demands special notice, we cannot ascribe to them any definite advance in the art itself.

Much of what he says about landscape is evidently owing to his interest in the science of optics as then understood. This led him in the first place to dilate upon the importance of perspective, which, as he justly says, is “the guide and the gateway (to art), and without this nothing can be done well in the matter of drawing.” He divides perspective into three principal sections, of which “the first treats of the diminution in the size of bodies at different distances; the second part is that which treats of the diminution of colour in these objects; the third (deals with) the diminished distinctness of the forms and outlines displayed by the objects at various distances.”<sup>1</sup> Of these three results of perspective the first as linear, the second as aerial perspective, were already familiar, but the third—the “perspective of disappearance” (*perdimenti*), as he elsewhere calls it—was certainly, we think, first pointed out by Leonardo, and its great importance has been illustrated in all fine landscape-art.

His propositions upon colour refer firstly to the variations resulting from reflected, opposed, and especially shadowed colours in nature. Then after some curious digressions he comes to the perspective of colours (*prospettiva aërea*) and is urgent upon the fact that light alone brings out true colour, but he occupies himself mostly with the influence of atmosphere in modifying colour, which at once takes him to landscape for illustration, pointing out that the greater density of the atmosphere towards the horizon causes a whiteness which disappears when, looking upwards, you behold “the insensible atoms against the infinite darkness above.” “Hence,” he admonishes the painter, “when you represent mountains, see that from hill to hill the bases are paler than the summits, while the

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. J. P. Richter's *Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci*, i. 17.

higher they are the more you must show their true form and colour."

Then comes the interesting section upon the "perspective of disappearance." Here he makes the pregnant remark that "every visible body in so far as it affects the eye includes three attributes; that is to say: mass, form, and colour; and the mass is recognisable at a greater distance from the place of its actual existence than either colour or form; while colour is discernible at a greater distance than form." This difference he also traces to the quantity of air interposed according to distance, and in this connection relates how when he was "once in a place on the sea, at an equal distance from the shore and the mountains, the distance from the shore looked much greater than that from the mountains"; illustrating



FIG. 78.—FROM A SKETCH BY L. DA VINCI.

his meaning by a sketch. (Fig. 78.) Under this head he repeatedly draws attention to the necessity of diminishing "the definiteness of the outline of

objects in proportion to their increasing distance from the eye of the spectator"; or he varies it thus, "if by the remoteness (of an object) we fail to discern it as a whole, much more must we fail to discern its parts and outlines." Was he referring to the Flemish style when in another place, dealing with the same subject, he exclaims—"How many in the representation of towns and other objects remote from the eye express every part of the buildings in the same manner as if they were near!" He was always observing the appearances of things under varying conditions—at sea, on the mountain, in the street; at noonday and at night.

But Leonardo went farther than finding illustrations of optical phenomena in landscape; he devoted a considerable portion of his writings to direct instruction in landscape-painting. Here, anticipating a great modern teacher, he begins with the structure of trees, describing this so minutely that one may be sure the fanciful tree of Perugino, of which we shall presently have to speak, found small favour in his eyes; indeed it may be shrewdly suspected that Leonardo had the prosperous Perugian in mind when he gives the sarcastic advice:—"Wherefore, O painter! you who do not know these laws, in order to escape the blame of those who understand them, it will be well that you should represent everything from nature, and not despise such study as those who work only for

money." The mention of "money" is significant, but whether there be a personal reference or no, the following proposition certainly condemns by implication the Perugino tree with its ever-drooping tips: "the tips of the boughs of trees, unless they are borne down by the weight of their fruits, turn towards the sky as much as possible."

After dwelling upon the varieties of ramification in elm, cherry, walnut, fir, etc., accompanied by numerous diagrams, he shows how some trees take a pyramidal form, and others a spherical, and proceeds to the accidents of colour, or rather of light, in the foliage of a tree; these, he says, are shadow, light, lustre (or reflected light), and transparency; but he is careful to add that "these accidents become confused at a great distance, and that which has most breadth (whether light or shade) will be most conspicuous." In another place, under the title "how to depict a landscape," he says: "Landscape should be represented so that the trees may be half in light and half in shadow, but it is better to do them when the sun is covered with clouds, for then the trees are lighted by the general light of the sky and the general darkness of the earth. This accords with the advice he elsewhere gives to paint portraits under the diffused light of an awning in a courtyard, in dull weather, or as evening falls, to secure softness and delicacy.

While, as we have seen, very particular as to the details of vegetation, he does not dwell upon the forms of mountains, though when he urges his imaginary scholar to "consider with the greatest care the forms of the outlines of every object, and the character of their undulations (*serpeggiature*), and that these undulations must be separately studied as to whether the curves are composed of arched convexities or angular concavities,"<sup>1</sup> the advice would certainly apply to mountain-forms among others, and a rough sketch (Fig. 79) introduced to show the parts of a mountain range in shadow, under a certain position of the sun, shows a thorough understanding of mountain outline, as numerous admirable sketches devoted expressly to mountain scenery abundantly prove. As objects of colour, it is clear that mountains were very charming to him; take

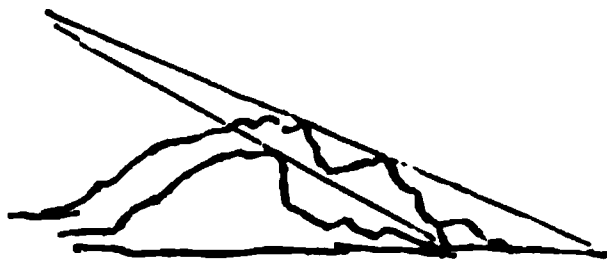


FIG. 79.—MOUNTAIN OUTLINES:  
L. DA VINCI.

<sup>1</sup> The distinction here seems to be much the same as that which I have pointed out in chap. iv. p. 54, where it is urged that the character of every fine line depends upon a discrimination of the curved and the straight in its composition.

the following passage:—"The colours of the shadows of mountains at a great distance take a most lovely blue, much purer than their illuminated portions, and from this it follows that when the rock of a mountain is reddish the illuminated portions are violet, and the more they are lighted the more they take their proper colour." "In winter," he says, "the mountains should not be shown blue as we see them in summer."

But if, in his elaborate study of the component parts of a landscape, Leonardo is wonderfully in advance of his age, he is still more so in the attention he gives to transitory effects in nature. He watches clouds, and in one very interesting memorandum tells how "over Milan he had seen a great variety of atmospheric effects," and that "lately, towards Lago Maggiore," he "saw a cloud, in the form of an immense mountain, full of rifts of glowing light, because the rays of the sun, which was already close to the horizon, tinged the cloud with its own hue." This cloud, he adds, was "so immensely large" that "it retained on its summit the reflection of the sunlight till an hour and a half after sunset."<sup>1</sup> He watches the sea, which, "when it is a little ruffled, has no sameness of colour; for whosoever looks at it from the shore will see it of a dark colour as it approaches the horizon, and will perceive also certain lights moving slowly on the surface like a flock of sheep": an admirable description. He speaks of the smoke of towns, the mists of morning and evening, and of dust as it rises in a landscape; "of the sunbeams passing through openings of clouds"; "of the beginnings of rain"; "of the seasons."

But that which most attracts him is the effect of wind, especially upon trees—upon the stems, the boughs, the leaves; and he describes at length how a storm should be depicted. "First show the clouds scattered and torn, and flying with the wind, accompanied by clouds of sand blown up from the seashore, and boughs and leaves swept along by the strength and fury of the blast, and scattered with other light objects through the air. Trees and plants must be bent to the ground almost as if they would follow the course of the gale, with their branches twisted out of their natural growth, and their leaves tossed and turned about. . . . Make the clouds driven by the impetuosity of the wind and flung against the lofty mountain-tops, and wreathed and torn like waves beating upon rocks." Three times over he describes how the

<sup>1</sup> Richter's *Da Vinci*, ii. 235.



tremendous phenomena of the Deluge should be rendered—"Darkness, wind, tempest at sea, floods of water, forests on fire, rain, bolts from heaven, earthquakes and ruins of mountains, overthrow of cities, . . . hills covered with men, women, and animals, and lightning from the clouds, illuminating everything."

Changing effects and movement—movement of wind and water, even to the whirlwind and the whirlpool—seem to have fascinated the mind of Leonardo. Turning to the sketches illustrating almost every page of these manuscripts, one is struck with the number of wild scrawls—as many of them appear at first—that describe more as diagram than picture the rolling, revolving tumble of clouds or the rush, the eddy, the spiral twists of water. Others are thoroughly pictorial. In one small pen-sketch the overthrow of trees and tearing up of bushes on a knoll by a violent hurricane are admirably given; in another the whirls of dust arising from a bergfall. But the most remarkable is an upright drawing, in which the opening of an Alpine valley is shown, with its low moraine hills stretching into the plain and sheltering a town upon the flat beside the stream. The vista of the valley beyond is arched over by tremendous storm-clouds, and blotted out by a downpour of rain. Above the hurly-burly repose in the pure heavens Alpine peaks. A want of adjustment here suggests that the view was not taken upon the spot, but was rather a record of some vivid impression. (Fig. 80.)<sup>1</sup>

We have called the peaks of this sketch Alpine; Mr. D. Freshfield suggests that the principal of them is the serrated summit of Mte. Resegone, near Lago di Lecco. Whether among numerous minute drawings of distant crests (in the Windsor collection), true to every incident of light and shade upon rocky pinnacles, Mte. Rosa may be recognised, is an interesting question,<sup>2</sup> but they indicate

<sup>1</sup> I regret that I am only able to give a comparatively imperfect reproduction of the drawing at Windsor.

<sup>2</sup> Leonardo speaks in a MS. now at Holkham of "*Mōboso giogo delle Alpi che dividono la Francia e l'Italia.*" He mentions Monboso also in two other places, and Dr. Richter, after having "*vainly enquired of every available authority for a solution of the mystery as to what mountain is intended*" by that name, suggests Mte. Rosa. But as the letters *b* and *v* in Da Vinci's orthography are very similar, Mr. D. Freshfield points out that Leonardo in these passages probably refers to a visit he paid to the neighbourhood of Mte. Viso, still locally known as "*Monveso*," and to the ascent of a pass (*giogo, jugum*, a col, not a peak) bearing the same name, which in his time was made very famous from the boring of the first Alpine tunnel by the Marquis of Saluzzo. It was completed in 1480. It was from this summit that Leonardo made several observations upon atmospheric phenomena.



FIG. 80.—STORM OVER AN ALPINE VALLEY: L. DA VINCI.

that Alpine peaks attracted Leonardo's frequent and close regard. Effects of early morning predominate, and he was quite aware that under such circumstances his precepts of disappearance do not hold, but that, lifted high into the crystal clearness, no definition is too precise for mountain-tops touched with rising dawn; indeed himself has said as much, "the higher they (mountains) are the more you must show their true form and colour."

Now when we compare this way of looking at nature (a way which, in its supreme regard for all phenomena, recalls Lucretius) with that of almost all previous art; when we think of the still, pure, lustrous skies, of the calm white flakes of cloud, of the mountains mere silhouettes of blue, of the trees standing motionless in the windless air, of the flowers and grasses stiff and symmetrical,—thinking of all these characteristics of earlier landscape-art, characteristics which belonged also to contemporary art, and to much that followed,—Leonardo's notes of changefulness and movement are very striking. But now comes the puzzle—Why did he import so little of this life and movement, of this observation of light and shade, of this interest in varieties of vegetation, into his pictures? why was all this enormous preparation for an adequate rendering of landscape apparently thrown away?

For in these pictures, which, however, as is well known, are very few, a wonder meets us. We are no longer in the natural world; there is a weird strangeness, as if this man had been in some region unvisited by mortals,—as if in vision he had landed upon some unknown planet, and returned, silently to record what he had seen there. Look at the background of the *St. Anna* in the Louvre—that wonderful dreamland, as if clouds had parted and shown for a moment its haggard wildness! A blue multitude of peaks—unreal only in their multitude, for each individual form might find warrant in nature—stand, heaps upon heaps of them, till they fade, near the very top of the picture, into a pale but deeply-toned sky. If he paints a portrait,—a Mona Lisa with an inscrutable smile,—there rises up behind her, its melancholy mocking the smile, the same unearthly landscape, all peaks and rocks and stretches of still water, in the silence of an absolute solitude. No work of man invades the scene, save that a single bridge spans one of the wandering water-channels,—a bridge that seems as if for ages no living thing had crossed it,—as if it led only to some unseen, abandoned, and forgotten city. No roof or tower, no

vestige of a wall, is seen upon the desolate shores of those endless fiords, whose waters rest in leaden sullenness; no breeze ruffles them, no tide stirs them; they know neither sail nor oar!

FIG. 81.—FROM THE VIRGIN OF THE ROCKS: L. DA VINCI, LOUVRE.

Still stranger was the thought that enshrouded the divine Mother and Child in a darksome cave, for in such gaunt surroundings sits the famous *Virgin of the Rocks*, so often repeated or copied.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A possible explanation might be found in the fact that the Apocryphal Gospels represent the birth to have taken place in a cave, to which the Virgin, suddenly taken with the pains of labour, was hurried.

And with regard to the mountains peculiar to Leonardo, while in *Cadore* I had intimated that those of the *Mona Lisa*, for instance, might be derived from mountains dolomitic in character, to which formation Humboldt was inclined to attribute them, the "Topographical Notes" now first published in Dr. Richter's work support a conclusion stated by Mr. D. Freshfield in his *Italian Alps* (published in 1875), that they are to be

(Fig. 81.) Some stalactite cavern—perhaps that of Oliero, near Bassano—must, we suppose, have captivated his shuddering fancy, and so he paints this memorial. Dark obelisks and teeth of rock shoot forth straight from the waters, that chilly-dark wind round their bases, and yield dull green reflections. They are met by a jagged curtain of rock from above, and between the two, fearful gleams of white light penetrate, revealing some sprays of leafage. One small town, seen through an opening, skirts a lonely strand, and the same portentous towers of rock hem in that farther region, all rock and water, receding in the distance; and all seen, as has been finely said, “under no ordinary night or day, but as in faint light of eclipse, or in some brief interval of falling rain at daybreak, or through deep water.”<sup>1</sup>

These things reveal a cast of thought very singular for one who lived, and, as it seemed, took joyous part, in all the activities, courtly and civic, of that brilliant time and place. Engines of war, and anon toys for children, occupied his busy leisure; for a masque or a pageant, none like Leonardo. But there were deep places in that soul, which his serious work brings dimly into view; and not only his serious, but his careless work too, for what of profound import may not be hid beneath his strange caricatures? those physiognomies, made up of every monstrosity and odd combination of feature,—was he inventing an abnormal race of men and women? If so, was he not also inventing a world for them to dwell in, when he put together these extraordinary landscapes? And as only through an intimate knowledge of form in feature could he construct these grotesques, so there must have been close study of rock-facets and mountain-peaks before he could invent so strange a world.

But Leonardo knew when to control his vagrant imaginings, and so in the portrait of the Nun at the Pitti, if it be his,<sup>2</sup> a convent

found among the mountains between Val Sassina and the Lago di Lecco. Speaking of the scenery of the latter, he says: “Hither Leonardo may have come, and looking across the narrow lake, or from beside some smaller pool or stream, at the stiff upright rocks of the Grigna and Resegone, have conceived the strange backgrounds with which we are all familiar.” Now Leonardo, in the notes referred to, says that “in the Val Sassina the largest bare rocks are to be found,” instancing especially those of the Mandello or Grigna. He says that in the valley are “*ruine e cadute d’acqua*”—rock-falls and falls of water; and “*cose fantastiche*,” supposed to mean rocks of extraordinary shapes. There are several indications in Leonardo’s notes that Alpine forms and atmospheric effects were studied from Milan, or in the Como district. <sup>1</sup> Pater.

<sup>2</sup> M. Arsène Houssaye believes in its authenticity: “Ce que je sais, c’est que c’est une des plus poétiques créations du Maître.”—*Histoire, Leonard de Vinci*, App. p. 441.

with its arcades sleeping in the sunlight occupies the background, and beyond it lies a landscape without a trace of the fantastic—soft, yet precise; bright, yet toned; every detail of a cultivated hillside, with its hedges, is faithfully rendered, though with perfect keeping. In the sky there is one fleck of a cloud, and a yellow light is spread along the peaceful horizon of the hills. It is a landscape to rest upon, and if the convent be, as asserted, that of the Annunziata at Florence, the hills may be those of Fiesole.

In this picture of the Nun there is a seemliness in the quiet scene, but one is the more surprised that Madonnas and Saints did not apparently impress him as too sacred to be associated with wild fancies; perhaps this was owing to their unhistorical character. Once, and once for all time, he dealt with the most solemn and touching event recorded in human story, and then he yielded full reverence to the great reality.

There, in that upper room, where the Saviour sat with His disciples on the eve of His betrayal, behind the sacred figure a window opens upon a twilight landscape; but no incongruous element jars upon the sight; a lovely stillness broods over sky and hill,—long, low slopes of hill, uncultivated, but not a wilderness,—a sweet secluded country. The divine calm of the Saviour is repeated in the quiet forms and perfect peace of the landscape. Every portion of it, in the triple glimpse afforded, helps to support the sentiment of that last meal at eventide. It is not the momentary incident of alarm and suspicion that is reflected in the landscape, but rather the words presently to be uttered:—"My peace I leave with you." If the soul of Leonardo was deep, here we sound something of its depth.<sup>1</sup>

Leonardo, the leading figure in a great age of art, was also the centre of a special group of painters, a few of whom we may now enumerate.

LORENZO DI CREDI (1458?-1536) was a fellow-pupil with Leonardo in the studio of Verrocchio, and his landscape is characteristic of himself. A pure and simple-minded man, he delighted in pure, bright, and simple landscapes, in which one reads something of the gentle Angelico's feeling. Nature with Credi, as with

<sup>1</sup> In most engravings a town is shown to the left, but when I last examined the fresco I could discern no buildings whatever, unless there be the hint of one small tower on the extreme right.

the saint of Fiesole, must show no stain, no trouble, no severity, no sign of the transient. Far be it from him to introduce the gray portentous jagged ranges that Leonardo reared upon his far mysterious horizons. No, he must have all that is green, and blue, and cheerful, and painted too with the most dainty finish, for, as we are told, he would set his palette with no end of gradations of tint, and then use a separate brush for each! Let us pardon, then, the hard, gay, unreal realism of the good man,—the archaic hills bright blue,—the stiff bunches of trees, with each separate leaf defined, the formal winding water, and winding paths, and the strange green cushions of grassy hill. He has neither the solemn mystery of Leonardo, nor the tender feeling of Verrocchio, and we see what comes of a lack of genius. Credi's pictures at Florence—Nos. 51 in the Academy, and 24 at the Uffizi—illustrate all his faults.

But sometimes we have to moderate our judgment of this painstaking painter, for in his picture at the Louvre of the *Lord appearing to Mary* the delicate transparent light upon the distant lake enchants us; and in the National Gallery his *Virgin adoring the Infant Christ* shows a quiet scene, where a bank with bushes impends over still water, the whole charmingly harmonious in its blue-grays. At Berlin too, where there are several specimens of the master, may be seen (No. 100) an example of his lovely grays, in mountains that rise against a sky of opal brilliance, and in gray towns, in front of the gray mountains. These are delightful incidents, although they may remind us too much of that careful palette.

PIERO DI COSIMO (1460-1521) was at one time actually considered a rival of Da Vinci; to us this is sufficiently surprising, nevertheless there was something in his character that rivals at least the fantastic vein of Leonardo. He was evidently a man of weird and powerful imagination; he invented torchlight processions of a gloomy magnificence the like of which had never been seen before in Florence, and his crowning achievement in this way was a *Masque of Death*, launched unexpectedly, a vast and terrifying spectacle, upon the streets of Rome during the carnival. It is more to our purpose that, according to Vasari, he would take his stand against an old befouled wall, and out of the discoloured surface "would image forth the most singular scenes, combats of horses, strangely ordered cities, and the most extraordinary landscapes that ever were seen; he did the same thing with the clouds of the sky

also." Strange recluse that he was, we are told "he kept himself constantly shut up, would not permit any one to see him work, . . . would never suffer his rooms to be swept, . . . would not have the soil of his garden cultivated, or the fruit-trees pruned, but suffered the vines to grow wild, and permitted their shoots to extend over the paths; neither would he have the fig or other trees properly trained and attended to, preferring to see all things wild and savage about him, as he was himself; and he used to say that everything of that kind was better left to nature, to be tended by herself alone. . . . He would sometimes set himself to seek animals, plants, or other productions out of the common order, . . . in these things he took an indescribable pleasure, insomuch that they transported him out of himself."

From such a man one might expect very peculiar landscape, and this is so in a way, but not at all in the sense that might have been looked for; there is nothing wild, gloomy, or startling about it; its strangeness consists in its frequently very modern manner. We have already referred to the points of interest in Cosimo Roselli's landscapes at the Sistine, in which we may trace the hand of his much abler scholar, Piero; there is a spaciousness and simplicity about the principal of those scenes, and Piero always showed a fondness for placing his figures (which, when he followed his own inclinations, were not of sacred but mythologic story) in the midst of a wide, natural scene. His subject from the history of Perseus in the Uffizi is of this kind; comparing it with one of Credi's devout pictures that hangs near, the contrast is remarkable. The pure paganism of Piero's subject is, of course, one element of difference, but that modern look of which we have spoken marks it still more. Vasari says of this—"The landscape also is very fine, the colouring being exceedingly soft and graceful, every tint blended with the most perfect harmony." It is this soft and graceful blending of tints which draws attention to the landscape, though we cannot say more of it than that it is pretty; there is no delicacy of detail, no transparency, no glow, the blue distance is no doubt pleasantly arranged, and the foreground is duly brown to show it off, but it is all mere paint and conventionalism. It is, however, this conventionalism that is surprising at so early a date; the man must have attained to a considerable freedom and power of generalisation to have fallen into it; but where is the imaginative conception that might have been predicated? If anywhere, it is expended upon

the sea-monster—Piero was great at monsters—and Vasari admirably exclaims that it is “impossible to conceive a sea-monster more whimsically imagined than this.”

But we must not dismiss Cosimo's landscapes with this single picture. Lady Eastlake says that “his landscape backgrounds are excellent, and possess an idyllic character of an indescribable charm.” Turning, then, to the *Death of Procris* (No. 698) in the National Gallery, we find a very sweet stretch of quiet landscape, with water, wide and still, flowing between low banks as it nears the sea; while here, unlike the *Perseus*, a soft glow pervades both sky and water; cranes amuse themselves on the shore, and small boats shimmer in the distance; a rag or two of cloud lies calm in the sky, and the tone of the whole is excellent. Here is something of Lady Eastlake's “idyllic charm.” She quotes another instance in his *Venus and Mars* at Berlin (107). Of this our notebook only enables us to say that there is a “fair, soft, blue distance.” Another in that collection (93), the *Infant Christ and the young St. John*, seems of a different type; the scene is very mountainous, with a vista of crags and a broad stream winding at their foot. In the *Coronation of the Virgin* again, in the Louvre, we miss the “idyllic”; there is a hard brown, and somewhat soulless landscape, but good in mountain-form, and in the feeling for a far horizon.

We must say in short that Piero di Cosimo's landscape entirely disappoints us in the qualities we might expect in a man of his temperament; and in its best known examples is more remarkable for a sort of conventional grace, unusual at the time, than for anything else. So far as his art went, he could have possessed no genuine imaginative gift, when he could fill the foreground of his *Perseus* with a number of gaily-dressed persons singing to the sound of various instruments to celebrate the deliverance of Andromeda. The gay landscape was suitable to the gay people, but to nothing else. The reputation which has attached to Cosimo's landscape background must be our excuse for the space bestowed upon him.

We come next to a noble artist, belonging, not to Florence, but to the Milanese country, whom we always associate with Leonardo, to whom, indeed, many of his pictures have been attributed. BERNARDINO LUINI (1470?-1530), without the great Da Vinci's grandeur and power, really rivals him in sweetness and feeling. No



one can look at the frescos in the corridor at the Brera without recognising the refined and elevated loveliness of Luini's Divine Mother. It is interesting to see how such a man treats landscape, and the same frescos supply us with examples; here we notice tender, but rather uncertain drawing; no colour in the sky, of whose depths he seems unconscious; a general tint of pale green or pale brown in the landscape; a free but conventional touch in the foliage, from which he does not vary; much truth of stem and branch in the trees; smooth cushions of grass, as in so many pictures of the time; and rocks studied from nature, but rather feebly delineated, and with much repetition of form. In landscape, Luini shows nothing of Leonardo's power and originality, any more than he fathoms what Leonardo saw concealed behind an eyelid or a smile; but, both in landscape and in heads, he has more grace; and whether he was a scholar of Leonardo's or not—the point being doubtful—it is certain that he followed his own refined and thoughtful nature, and found it a sufficient guide.

In S. Maurizio, Milan, there are many excellent works by Luini, containing specimens of foliage which are remarkably free and vigorous in touch; and if the large landscape in the Baptism be by him, it is perhaps his best; a fine range of mountains, subsiding into graceful hills, lies upon the horizon; nearer the eye are masses of foliage, and an avenue of trees evidently studied from nature.

But there is an oil picture in the Brera which is more distinctly a landscape than any other of Luini's, *The Drunkenness of Noah*, wherein the ark, more like a modern factory than anything else, appears stuck on the top of a hill. The foliage is all delicately worked, but with an endless repetition of the same sprays, and all in heavy masses of colour. The clouds are mere wool-bags. Clearly he had not watched for the purpose of his art the pearly wonders that possess the sky! The distance makes some amends in its sweet blue, and in the foreground the flowers and weeds are done with loving care; but the green knolls are shaven and brown as they approach the eye. The whole is stiff and airless, but warm in colour, low in tone, and so far pleasing; we might liken it to a poor Giorgione. It is evident that fresco, with its simpler flat tints, suited Luini's style better.

BELTRAFFIO (1467-1516) was also a Milanese. He only deserves a passing glance because, being a scholar of Leonardo's, he sometimes

affects the same singular distant mountain shapes which so much attracted his master. A solitary picture of his in the National Gallery (728), a *Madonna and Child*, supplies an instance of this. In the Louvre, on the other hand, where a Virgin and Child are seated in a landscape, there are only blue sweeps of low hill, hard and cold, and black bushes in front. With the exception of Luini, none of the names mentioned since that of Leonardo are of first-rate importance.

We turn now to one of the chief figures of that age in art; yet one who was neither Florentine nor Milanese. We must indeed take up the thread that was dropped after touching upon Piero della Francesca, the Umbrian. PIETRO PERUGINO, or VANNUCCI (1466-1522) claims particular notice at our hands, for his landscape is of a singular charm, and it set the fashion for others. Though not of the great company of Florentine artists, Perugino was a fellow-student with Leonardo under Verrocchio, and adopted for a time the Florentine manner. Then he fell into his native Umbrian mood of devotional ecstasy and pathos, upon which at last (seduced by great gain) he simply traded. His landscape too, with its pathetic sweetness, is Umbrian. Citta della Pieve, not far from Perugia, was the place of his birth and of his fond remembrance. From that lofty spot it is said three lakes are visible, those of Monte Pulciano, Chiusi, and Trasimeno. The writer is doubtful about the two first-named, but the last is the most conspicuous object in the scenery,—a bar of soft light in the distance. Beyond it rises Mte. Alto S. Egidio, in front lies the plain that skirts the lake on the west, and from which juts out the dark promontory of Castiglione del Lago with its fortified and abandoned palace; hills richly wooded, or swelling into graceful grassy downs, fill up the middle distance. This, the view across the lake, is not that adopted by Perugino, not even in the noble fresco painted for his native town in the Chapel of Sta. Maria de' Bianchi; but it contains all the elements of the landscape peculiar to him. Mr. Ruskin, though admitting that the Perugino landscape is "for grace and purity . . . unrivalled," yet does not advance it for imitation. "Let it be distinctly observed," he says, "that all this mannered landscape is only right under the supposition of its being a background to some supernatural presence; behind mortal beings it would be wrong, and by itself as landscape ridiculous." It is hard to believe

that the great critic was really thinking of Perugino in saying this. We should rather suppose that others he had named along with him were in his thoughts, for the Perugino landscapes, with the exception of one curious feature, appear to the writer wonderful for their simple truth as well as beauty.

No doubt their range is limited. As for the cloud-world, that is not for him; he must have the still profound of a cloudless twilight, or he will admit only those calm stretches of cloud that lie motionless across the sky. But in that level line of lake or sea what repose is there! what sense of peace! On either side descend the long smooth promontories, broken on one or the other hand by a peculiar crag, continually to be recognised, but perfectly true to nature. Then there is a plain of absolute flatness, where some kind of woodland mingles dimly with the soft gloom of the waste; and nearer hills, tufted with bushes, fold in the scene. So far the landscape is perfectly adapted for "mortal beings," and has certainly no trace of the "ridiculous." It might even be possible to identify it with an actual scene; the writer has a strong conviction that though the prospect from Citta della Pieve does not answer to the conditions, as he certainly had hoped it would, some point of view in the neighbourhood of the Trasimeno Lake on the Perugia side, and looking westward, would fulfil them, and prove that the painter had very faithfully copied natural features. It would be interesting to discover whether the lake would ever reach the sky-line, Perugino's favourite effect, but that suggestion of infinite distance may have been the painter's own; the peculiar promontories one might be more sure of.<sup>1</sup>

In one point only is Perugino's landscape "supernatural." Rising tall and slim upon the nearest heights, and penetrating the pure sky, appears in almost every picture a very singular tree. There is so much truth in the Peruginesque landscape that it is hard to believe this tree to have been altogether an invention; yet here it seems is his one fantastic fancy. Much may be seen that is very like it

<sup>1</sup> Upon this point Mr. Douglas W. Freshfield has kindly supplied the following information:—"Nowhere in Thrasymene would you get a 'sea-horizon.' But looking north from Torricella you see a perfectly level, low, land-horizon towards Val di Chiana, which gives the effect of the level background of Perugino. As to the promontories, in none of the Perugino views are local facts adhered to, but the general resemblance is so close that there can be no doubt of the inspiration. The island outline is exact, and also its relation to the low spit. . . . I got up and caught the early train (from Perugia), and walked along the lake for eight miles to ascertain these facts."

pencilled against the lemon-tinted purity of an Italian evening,—the tall slenderness, the delicate branching, the flatness as if all the leafage were on one plane—but the aspen, which comes nearest in general character, does not droop its sprays after the graceful Peruginesque way, which we are constrained to say was a way of his own, and intended to convey one impression only, that of delicate refined definition of form against a glowing purity of light. We have already suggested that Leonardo was thinking of Perugino's trees when he advised certain painters to study nature.



FIG. 82.—FROM THE ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN: PERUGINO.

One of the best specimens of Perugino's landscape of lake, promontory, and plain is to be found in No. 55, the *Assumption of*

FIG. 83.—LANDSCAPE OF CHRIST IN THE GARDEN: PERUGINO.

*the Virgin* in the Florence Academy. It is a vast low landscape without objects, an endless vista, faint and far, very suggestive. (Fig. 82.) No. 53 again, *Christ in the Garden*, in the same collection, is of infinite delicacy; behind the quiet gray town the

mountain promontories descend to a still sea, for such it seems to be. These mountains are a little hard, a little cardboardy, though mountains in the clear yet soft Italian light often look so (the outline darker than the interior, as was noticed by Da Vinci). Here, on a near bluff, rise the trees that so pleased this painter's fancy. (Fig. 83.) In the *Resurrection* at the Vatican appears his characteristic lake, a very sweet vista between low hills, charmingly disposed; the crag on the right, however, differs from his usual type in the horizontal strata breaking out near the top. The sky is lustrous. The colours, from some technical defect, have turned disagreeably green, but the simplicity and calm are admirable.

In the famous fresco at Sta. Maddalena dei Pazzi at Florence—the Crucifixion, in three compartments—there is a difference. The landscape is hilly, with sparse trees; there is no distant lake, but a winding stream, with reflections of the trees and banks in its quiet reaches. And here, as we look, we cannot but remark—as in the case of Angelico—upon the strange incongruity between the awful subject and a landscape, such as this, of pleasant meadows and green slopes, among which a small town is agreeably situated on the banks of the stream just mentioned, and at the feet of sheltering crags. In this composition, however, there is, strange to say, less of an historical intention than in Angelico. The solemn scene, with its adoring saints, is here a subject altogether symbolic. It is intended for devout and loving contemplation,—for an hour of holy peace, when, not the tremendous expiation for human sin, but the sight of Him who “loved me and gave himself for me” is to absorb the soul. Let the scene, then, be such in its quiet features as may not divert contemplation from the One Figure by any striking or dramatic effect, but be simply a pleasing prospect seen under the hush of evening. A similar effect may be observed in a *Crucifixion* by Perugino at S. Agostino in Siena. Low hills, one strip of water, and a row of delicate trees standing among brown fields in front, make up a lovely scene. It is all in sweet gradations, quiet and tender, like the expression of the adoring figures.

In the National Gallery the *Virgin adoring the Infant Christ* offers an excellent example of the Perugino landscape, and there is a perfect sympathy between the sweet and silent reverence of the Virgin Mother and the peace of that morning hour when dawn first whitens the east, and lake and river and darkling plain yet lie

**FIG. 84.—LANDSCAPE OF THE MADONNA: PERUGINO—NATIONAL GALLERY.**

steeped in twilight shade. (Fig. 84.) But perhaps none of his landscapes is finer than that of his own portrait at the Uffizi. It may be supposed that in so personal a subject a painter would introduce what was dearest to his thought, and in that most lovely background, with its far lake-line, or possibly sea-horizon between low headlands, the twilight tone, the town lost in the gloom of a rich woodland, the single tree rising to view through the evening haze, we surely see what Perugino most loved to look upon.

We will take our leave of this original painter within the stately walls of the Sistine chapel. His works there, however, were not his latest, but painted in his early fame; they were completed in 1486, when Perugino was forty years of age, and he lived and painted for six and thirty years afterwards; but we can here compare him with some of his great contemporaries. He would have occupied the place of highest honour had not his work upon the vast altar-wall been effaced to make way for Michael Angelo's portentous vision of the Judgment. As it is, three of the side wall-frescos are attributed to him. Of these, one from the history of Moses (the Zipporah incident) has been claimed for Signorelli; the landscape, however, would, we think, testify on behalf of Perugino. The distant lake, with its low hills, and the crag that ends abruptly upon its shores, are at any rate Peruginesque. But his familiar tree is not so obvious, and a palm and a tree cut into rings are more after the fanciful manner of Gozzoli than the simplicity of Perugino or the dignity of Signorelli. The rocks resemble Ghirlandaio; but then it is known that Perugino studied the latter to advantage, and more especially in the spacious character of his landscapes.

No doubt has been expressed till lately concerning the two frescos on the opposite wall.<sup>1</sup> In the *Baptism* a small lake forms the "eye" of the landscape, and the poetry of the scene consists in the solemn hills which lift themselves, dark and still, round the single streak of solitary water. The crags are not of Perugino's

<sup>1</sup> The doubter is Morelli, whose work upon *Italian Pictures in German Galleries* was not published when my notes upon the Sistine frescos were taken. Morelli claims both the Zipporah fresco and the Baptism for Pinturicchio. He says, p. 267: "If we look first of all at the landscape background of both pictures, we must at once confess that those steep masses of rock, those cypresses and palms, that beautifully-shaped hollow of the valley, and even the falcon in the air pursuing smaller birds, are more in the style of Pinturicchio's landscapes than those of Perugino." It will be seen that with respect to these frescos certain differences from the Perugino type of landscape are pointed out in the text, and the significant fact referred to that Perugino had more than one assistant. So far the Pinturicchio theory is somewhat favoured.

usual kind, and the trees are archaic, but we must remember how much of his life yet lay before him, and also that in these frescos he had more than one assistant. A more curious point is the introduction of the Coliseum, a Roman arch of triumph, and the Pantheon. The idea of introducing these was probably suggested by Botticelli's frescos executed shortly before. The Coliseum alone is represented in its ruined state. In the third fresco—the *Giving of the Keys*—triumphal arches of Roman type also form part of the composition, but they stand in all the bravery of newness. Perugino's pathos is found in the distant hills and the small lake they surround, and it is the poetical feeling expressed in these which distinguishes all his landscapes.

LUCA SIGNORELLI (1441?-1524), though probably not the author of the *Moses and Zipporah* fresco just referred to, left one specimen

FIG. 85.—LANDSCAPE IN THE SISTINE CHAPEL BY SIGNORELLI.

of his genius to adorn the famous walls, in *Moses reading the Law*; it gives an opportunity of estimating his treatment of landscape. (Fig. 85.) Not that he has done much of it; while landscape was excellently suited in its aspects of tenderness and peace for the expression of Perugino's feeling, the mightier Signorelli found no



adequate field for his powers short of the sphere in which angels and demons contend—"the placid smile of blessedness has been denied him." But in the portion of the history of Moses he had to illustrate, landscape was necessary; it was not possible to plant Mount Nebo in the air, and the prospect of the Promised Land had to be suggested. For the mountain it was perhaps allowable to substitute a crag, and there is a good deal of nature in its strata and its cushioned entablature, the type being that of Ghirlandaio. The trees, too, are free in foliage, graceful in stem, and without a trace of the fantastic. For the Land of Promise there is a lake, into which great cliffs, very true in drawing, descend, with a peep of cheerful hilly distance beyond; the foreground, and the buildings of a small town (no scene could be real to these old painters without a town), are dark against the gleaming lake, a cold white piece of water, Signorelli being in this respect far less poetical than Perugino, who puts lake and hill under a tender gloom. On the other hand, the group surrounding the *Death of Moses*, an episode in the background, is by Signorelli, picturesquely depicted against a clear light in the sky.

More characteristic, as we might judge, of so original and powerful a hand as Signorelli's, is a predella in three parts, representing the Annunciation, the Nativity, and the Adoration of the Magi, which hangs at the Uffizi near his master Francesca's portraits of the Duke and Duchess of Urbino. In these is seen a harsh brush indeed, but a very effective landscape, strong in drawing, hard and clear in its blue grays and brown greens, and full of vigorous contrasts.

Again there is in No. 36 in the same Gallery (the *Virgin and Infant Christ*), a deep-toned landscape, though with rocks strange and board-like; the sky here is of Peruginesque quality, but there is no air. Siena contains two specimens. At S. Domenico is a sharp well-defined and well-composed landscape, and at the Academy in the *Destruction of Troy* there is a clever piece of woodland with a picturesque clump of trees upon a bank, whose contorting trunks and grasping roots recall the hand that could depict the writhing men and demons on the dreadful wall at Orvieto, where, as Vasari expresses it, "the master had imagined to himself all that shall go to make up the terrors of that last tremendous day."

In the large *Nativity* from Citta di Castello now at the National Gallery, the rocky scenery is so bad in its helpless repetition of poor

forms and glaring colour that it is impossible to recognise in it the painter of the Sistine fresco or of any other of the landscapes mentioned. It is no less inconsistent with the slight indication of scenery contained in the *Triumph of Chastity*, of the same Gallery, in which the hillside tower, and the reddened evening clouds resting over a distant plain, show something of true landscape.

Signorelli, born, and living for the most part, on the lofty hill of Cortona, was neither Florentine nor Umbrian, and in art he dwells by himself, mated only with Buonarrotti. Yet he had nothing of the latter's melancholy sternness. His plain and honest countenance is not that of a seer of visions. He "was a good old man, exceedingly courteous and agreeable," and "he lived always rather in the manner of a noble and a gentleman than in that of a painter." Such is the testimony of Vasari, who remembered the tenderness with which the old painter bound a jasper round his neck, then a boy of eight years old, to stop a bleeding of the nose. Perhaps we read something of the prosaic side of his character in his solid, truthful, and generally unideal landscape.

We have dealt with Signorelli in this place in order to compare him with Perugino in the Sistine; but there was a Bolognese painter, IL FRANCA, or RAIBOLINI (1450-1517), who, probably the result of admiring imitation, so much resembled Perugino in feeling and subject, that we naturally turn from the one to the other. Franca—he took that name out of affection for a master who bore it—was one of that illustrious body of goldsmiths who in those days distinguished themselves as painters. Originally he executed works in niello, in silver enamelled, and medallion portraits that brought him great fame. But he yearned after colour, and entertained artists in his house that they might teach him how to paint; so he became a painter, and, if never a colourist in the sense the Venetians have taught us to attach to that word, he wrought with a marvellous jewel-brilliance of tint. That he was a man of special tenderness and purity of feeling might be inferred from the countenances of his Madonnas, "the most devoutly beautiful," said Raphael, that he ever knew. To read aright the spiritual grace of the noblest womanhood is a rare gift, and one looks to see how a painter possessing such endowment reads the spiritual grace of landscape. Here, then, is a note taken before one of his pictures, an *Annunciation* in the Brera (331)—"there is a charming distance of

lake, with calm hills beyond, a gray building or two on the shore, vivid still reflections of the building and the trees in the sweet blue water, a sky of translucent opal." (Fig. 86.) Here again is a note in the Gallery at Parma—*Madonna and Child with St. John* (359)—"a soft exquisitely low-toned landscape lost in mist or twilight, one spire rising out of the haze." This effect of a single spire or campanile was a favourite one both with Perugino and Titian in evening scenes. At Parma also is what our note-book marks as the finest of Francia's landscapes for colour—*Virgin enthroned with Saints* (130)—"deep in tone, the richest twilight of the dawn." Still again at Parma, in a *Deposition* (123), is "a very striking

FIG. 86.—FROM AN ANNUNCIATION BY FRANZIA, BRERA.

evening light touching with rose tints upon the cold towers of Jerusalem and the cold hills beyond; while above is a wondrous lemon-tinted sky."

These notes indicate that Francia saw what we might hope he would see in landscape, but the subjects referred to above are among his choicest works; a very distinct progress is to be observed in his art, accounted for by the fact that for some time it was not familiar to him. Thus many of his works are hard, cold, formal and without the rich blending power of a master. In the St. Stephen at the Borghese Gallery, exquisite in other respects, there is a lovely blue distance, but very archaic in its hard edges. In the nearer meadows are stiff metallic trees, and one standing straight and still, is of thorough Peruginesque type; some curious quarries in front may have been intended to provide stones for the murder; the light in the sky is wonderful. Bologna offers specimens of both sorts. In

a *Nativity* (No. 81) we have a cold blue sky, cold blue mountains, though gracefully disposed, a sort of park with elms, a castle and a farm, water transparent, gradated, and carefully showing reflections; only in the foreground occur some slender unreal slips of trees associated with smooth quarry-like and be-cushioned rocks. (Fig. 87.) Reflections in water, we may observe, are characteristic of Francia, and remind us that he had been familiar with the lustrous qualities of silver-work; he is fond also of the rounded forms of the park-like elm, relieved against a dark hill or mass of wood. In the very

FIG. 87.—LANDSCAPE OF A NATIVITY: FRANZIA, BOLOGNA.

pretty specimen of his landscape, that of the Brera (331) already mentioned, both these characteristics appear, and one is disposed to say that in it and in the elm-shaded meadow of the *Nativity*, we have remarkable examples of a simple rural scene. Taken by itself there is no discordant note in these spectacles of homely yet idyllic peace, differing in this from the petty realism of the Flemings.

Mr. Ruskin extols the skies of Francia as "more wonderful than any," being with all their brilliance so "cool, and behind figures in full light." But, as he says, "to paint . . . light rightly, it may often be necessary to paint nothing else rightly; but if the artist is painting something he knows and loves, as he knows it, because he

loves it, whether it be . . . the clear sky of Francia, or the blazing incomprehensible mist of Turner, he is all right." It is this intense, clear, but cold brilliance that certainly distinguishes Francia, and it is well here to remember that, so treated, it is as suggestive of mystery as the "incomprehensible mist," of which Mr. Ruskin has written so much. No one, however, has analysed with more force and beauty the source of this mystery of clearness than Mr. Ruskin himself. "There is," he says, "an unsearchableness without cloud or concealment, an infinite unknown, but no sense of any veil or interference between us and it: we are separated from it, not by any anger of storm, not by any vain and fading vapour, but only by the deep infinity of the thing itself. I find that the great religious painters rejoiced in that kind of unknowableness, and in that only. . . . Behind their sacred figures" they would put only "the far away sky and cloudless mountains." "Probably the right conclusion is that the clear and cloudy mysteries are alike noble." In this "conclusion" we most thoroughly agree. And if we attempt to analyse this quality of nobleness in clear skies and distances, we shall find that absolute perfection of tint is one element, and sense of utter stillness another; nothing moves over sky or hill—no spray of leafage stirs—there is something like a "Nirvana" of nature.

Comparing Francia with Perugino we may say that his landscape is more varied, his scenes are often more picturesque; but that he seldom reaches the rich tones of the Umbrian, and he more often disappoints. When Francia was debarred by his material from displaying the purity and depth of his tones, his picturesqueness is still apparent; this is shown in his frescos at the Chapel of St. Cecilia in Bologna, where trees of slender grace, as well as some more massive, are grouped upon a high bank. In this instance he is more like Ghirlandaio than Perugino.

It seems to be a questionable point whether LORENZO COSTA of Ferrara (1460-1536) was the teacher or the pupil of Francia, but he was certainly the friend, and if he studied originally, as Vasari says, under Benozzo Gozzoli, and got from him the notion of putting his subjects in the midst of landscape, Francia nevertheless became his model. But he followed at a humble distance. We miss in his landscape the pure splendour, the sweetness and the calm of the greater master. In one of Costa's most noted pictures, *The Duchess of Mantua crowned by Love*, now at the Louvre, while

there is some delicacy of foliage, some distance in the lake, there is little but dull heavy commonplace in the blue greenness of a Gozzoli sort that pervades the picture. There is no glow, no depth, neither air nor transparency. A better specimen is in the Brera, where, although the rocks are of the utmost impossibility, there is a "strath" in the centre, with a stream winding from a vast distance, and a hazy blue horizon, that suggest a sweet scene somewhere in the painter's thought.<sup>1</sup> But it is only the distance that pleases, for not the rocks merely, but the trees are fantastic. Nor will his distances generally bear looking into. In Mr. Leyland's *Virgin and St. Joseph in Adoration*, the soft harmony of blues which fills a window, attractive at first, reveals upon examination a foolish and purposeless combination of little objects, such as one might expect from only the feeblest hand.

Fresco seems to have suited Costa better. In the Bentivoglio Chapel at Bologna, *The Triumph of Death*, a subject taken from Petrarch, shows a striking sweep of landscape,—brown, rocky, wild and bold. And in the chapel of St. Cecilia, where his friend Francia had worked, two frescos much damaged, hard, cold and opaque in colour, show good landscape composition, and picturesque incidents.

Let us add, moreover, that if the portrait of Francesco Ferrucci in the National Gallery be by Costa, it contains in the background a view of the Piazza Granduca at Florence, which is a true piece of art. The gloomy palace, and the gleam of light on the houses beyond, seen through the columns of the Loggia, are admirable.<sup>2</sup>

AMICO ASPERTINI (1474-1552) occupies some compartments of the St. Cecilia Chapel at Bologna, along with Francia and Costa. Vasari derides him as one who learned his art by indiscriminate copying, and Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle dismiss him as a "free and bold third-rate, of a quaint and fantastic character." Nevertheless his landscapes seem to us to deserve notice for their remarkable freedom, especially those in a side chapel of San Frediano at Lucca. His trees are excellent, and there is an ease and grace in his

<sup>1</sup> Whether this be the Val Reno near Bologna, which Morelli states to be generally represented in the landscape backgrounds of Costa, I am unable to say, nor does my observation, perhaps too limited, allow me to think that "in their fine sense of line and their poetical conception" these backgrounds are unrivalled among the landscapes of his contemporaries.

<sup>2</sup> Morelli thinks that this picture is probably the work of Piero di Cosimo.

composition of scenery which in that age is quite other than "third-rate."

Returning to the Umbrian country, and to a somewhat earlier date, we find in PINTURICCHIO (1454-1513) one who made his mark in landscape.

There is something touching about the busy, perhaps boastful little man—little and deaf, and so nicknamed "Sordicchio," but hard-working and honest. He was popular with his rich patrons for fulfilling their orders quickly and faithfully, and for putting in plenty of blue and gold when desired; he kept his eye upon the best work going, especially Perugino's, who was his fellow-townsmen; and he got the young Raphael to help him in the designs for his best production, the frescos in the library of the Duomo at Siena. And, little better than art-manufacturer as he was, he really took pains, and meritoriously improved in his art as years went on, so that he has obtained a recognised position among the "masters."

Pinturicchio went to Rome to assist Perugino in his Sistine frescos; he does not seem, however, to have meddled in the landscape portions.<sup>1</sup> Soon afterwards he was engaged upon work of his own in Rome—five scenes in the life of St. Jerome. Of these Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle remark that "his landscapes are already a medley of rocks of fretful curves, tunnelled into holes, and clothed with spare verdure, a permanent feature in him, and essentially characteristic of the Umbrian." This is not promising, but the painstaking man did better afterwards, sometimes influenced by Perugino, and falling into a meditative mood, but more persistently following what was even then called "The Flemish style," which, gay and bright, probably pleased both himself and his patrons better; he would even in some cases touch up his trees with gilding, though painting commendably with great minuteness of finish. He was rather fond of landscape, and of actual views. In the newly-erected Belvidere of the Vatican "he painted," says Vasari, "a Loggia

<sup>1</sup> In a previous note I have quoted Morelli's opinion that two of the frescos attributed to Perugino are actually and entirely the work of Pinturicchio. Morelli is, however, a special pleader on behalf of Pinturicchio, desiring, he says, "to reinstate an artist . . . by giving him back his best property, of which he has been robbed by the disfavour and blindness of posterity." I may add that I somewhat question Morelli's judgment in the matter of landscape, since he exclaims respecting one of the backgrounds described by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle as "a medley of rocks," etc., "how glorious the landscape with the steep-tunnelled rocks, the cypresses and palms!" No scenery of Pinturicchio's has appeared "glorious" to me.



entirely with landscapes . . . and depicted therein Rome, Milan, Genoa, Florence, Venice, and Naples, after the manner of the Flemings," things that are now become "formless vestiges." Elsewhere he introduced a view of Siena, and again in an *Annunciation* at Spello, he gave a distant view of the hills around, through an archway.

Whether for good or for ill, then, Pinturicchio must have his place in landscape assigned to him; perhaps it is already sufficiently indicated, but we must look at some of his performances. In the library of the Duomo at Siena is a series of his frescos, and as the intention of them was to illustrate the life of Æneas Silvius, who reached the papal chair as Pius the Second, and since this potentate was to be shown travelling and voyaging to councils and courts, landscape became a necessary feature. The scenery is all painted brightly enough, the towns are red-tiled and gay, and the trees are stark-staring objects; but in one composition, said to represent Ancona, the sea recedes to a calm blue distance, galleys in full sail plough the waves, low cerulean-tinted hills follow the curving shores, and above is a clear lemon sky. In another, where the lake of Constance may be intended, a rainbow spans both lake and land, and though the rain and cloud from which it springs are certainly oddly presented, yet the attempt is noteworthy, as are various other incidents in the series which show an eye for the picturesque. Better still in this respect is a picture in tempera (No. 45) in the Academy at Siena, where there is a landscape of much feeling; a low long line of sea is seen through graceful trees, and dark mountains lie along the horizon.

Less favourable than these to Pinturicchio's reputation in landscape are the three pictures illustrating the story of Griselda in the National Gallery. In these the impossible rocks, and the hardness with which they and the curious trees cut against the sky, strike the eye very disagreeably. It will be instructive farther on to observe how Titian treated a similar effect. Then the clouds, what wool-bags! Throughout these landscapes there is a minute copying of details, but no generalisation. One piece of distant sea is sweet and still, and reveals Perugino, but it is almost the only satisfactory object. These pictures are also in tempera, which Pinturicchio preferred to oil, and comparing them with the Siena frescos it seems as if the more brilliant colours at disposal, and the opportunity for a niggling finish, seduced him into spoiling his landscape, which at the best we are constrained to say seldom went beyond that of the decorator.



Yet, not to part from him with so hard a word, let us acknowledge that with brilliant colours Pinturicchio did often achieve a wonderful luminousness of atmosphere. This is seen in his *Story of Joseph* at the Borghese Gallery. So also in his *Madonna and Child* at the National Gallery, where, along with all his defects (including trees loaded with paint, and gilt besides), there is a sky of exquisite depth and wonderful gradations, as well as a great perspective of distance indicated within a small space. There is always a charm in this perfection and purity of atmosphere and light,—that charm to which Van Eyck first showed the way. Pinturicchio died at Siena, and sadly enough if, as is said, it were owing to the cruel neglect of his wife.

Siena, no longer a centre of art-power, had now for the most part to seek her art from strangers. Yet one or two Sienese may be named who sustained more or less the traditional fame of the city. One of these was BERNARDINO FUNGAI (1460-1516). He retains something of the tone and depth characteristic of the school, and Lady Eastlake remarks that his landscapes, "though peculiar in their faint blue distance, recall Pinturicchio." Some of his pictures are in the Academy at Siena. One of them shows skill in dealing with several successive distances; another is a feebler Perugino in character. We may quote, too, a picture belonging to Mr. W. Graham, and exhibited at Burlington House in 1879. A soft brown gloom in the distance almost suggests Rembrandt; but it is distance only that he can manage—the bronze-bright bushes and their heavy rounded forms are in no way superior to much early art.

PACCHIAROTTI and DEL PACCHIA are men whose works are much confused together. Of the two, it would appear that Pacchia more frequently indulged in landscape, but with either painter it was of the Peruginesque type; there is sure to be a lake and hills, and a certain amount of harmonious colouring. They are only imitators whose merits belong to others, whose faults are their own.

The last name of moment connected with Siena is that of a Lombard—ANTONIO DE BAZZI, or IL SODOMA (1480 ?–1549)—who, though much of a wanderer, lived more at Siena than anywhere else. He was an eccentric and disreputable genius, but a genius certainly, distinguished in his art by a vein of tenderness and an occasional

air of nobility, in strange contrast with his life of harlequinade. Bazzi, one of whose better points was a fondness for all sorts of animals,<sup>1</sup> had a ready brush for them, and for anything he was paid for. He was also fond of crowding into his figure-subjects as much landscape as could be put in, but shows in it none of the high qualities which sometimes appear in his personages, and it has been excellently remarked that "he more than any other reminds us in his landscapes of the antique wall-paintings. The careless manner in which he handles the perspective, thrusting the background upwards, the peculiar way in which he brings the objects together, his ornamental treatment of the little horses, swine and dogs in the distance, his choice of colours, and the general decorative effect, produce the impression of some such remarkable relationship"—(R. Vischer).

The accuracy of this curious identification with much of the ancient wall-painting will be recognised at once before such a picture as Sodoma's admired St. Sebastian in the Uffizi. Even the catalogue describes the landscape as "*un paese molto complicato*," and it is indeed but a confused scramble of objects. In his famous fresco illustrating the life of St. Catherine at S. Domenico in Siena, the scenery is picturesque, with its cliffs, old trees and graceful foliage, justifying so far the praise bestowed by some critics upon his landscape, as well as the resemblance traced in it to the fresco landscape of Francia; but then the crowd of objects, the round temple, the bridge, the ruins, the waterfall, the boat, reveal its utterly artificial and ornamental character—a character which we can never accept as that of genuine landscape. It was scenery suitable enough to "the merry people," as Lanzi, rather to our surprise, denominates the Sienese of that time; it was entirely out of harmony with the ecstasy or the prayers of a St. Catherine. Perugino, painting for the same people, knew better.

The writer from whom we have quoted above speaks of the landscapes in Bazzi's frescos at Mte. Oliveto as especially "charming, bright, and genuinely idyllic." These were early works, and perhaps on that account less mannered. In his noted fresco, too, of the

<sup>1</sup> He thus enumerates them in an official return of his property: "Further, I have a monkey, moreover a raven which can talk, and which I keep by me in order that he may teach from his cage a theological jackass also to speak. Item: an owl to frighten the witches, two peacocks, two dogs, two cats, a sparrow-hawk, and other birds of prey, six fowls, eighteen chickens, two moor-fowl, and many other birds, to name all of which would only cause confusion."

*Nuptials of Alexander and Roxana*, at the Farnesina in Rome, he seems to have introduced an actual view of the Tiber, with one or two of the bridges, and the precipitous heights of the Aventine; but here his vagrant fancy was controlled by nature, which is rendered with a certain picturesque grace. Sodoma was always rapid, recklessly altering his design as he went on, and was not likely therefore to spend much time, thought, or feeling upon the landscape which was only ornamental background, nor need we dwell upon it longer.

We have been wandering a while among Milanese, Bolognese, and Perugian painters, and have come round at last to Siena. Let us now return to the rich valley of the Arno, where one awaits us whose pure and pious life is a wholesome contrast to that of Bazzi. We can trace the art-lineage of FRA BARTOLOMMEO (1476-1517) in the fact that he first studied in the workshop of Cosimo Roselli, about the year 1484, when the Sistine frescos were approaching completion, and Ghirlandaio was at the height of his fame. Bartolommeo is a painter whose works are more uniformly excellent—more perfectly fulfilling their purpose, though that purpose may not have had much variety in it,—than almost any we could name. His aim is certainly limited. He eschews all but religious themes. He does not deal dramatically with scriptural or any other scenes, nor does he concern himself with the great monumental subjects suitable to fresco. His excellences are shown in panel and in oil-painting, where he confines himself to the solemn grouping of saints, and to the graceful presentation of the Divine Mother and Child. But then the saints and the Madonna are of excelling dignity and beauty, and are given with perfection of workmanship. The noble composition, the rich harmonious colour, the admirable drawing, the drapery, every fold of which falls with exquisite adjustment—these show a technical skill not to be surpassed.

And when we turn to the landscape of Bartolommeo, not only are all technical excellences there, but—and we call particular attention to it—a style which marks an extraordinary advance upon any landscape that has yet come under our notice, unless we may except Francia's. In the first place, there is nothing archaic. No grotesque rocks offend us, no startling, unbelievable mountain-shapes career along the horizon; no cushiony grass, no bronze-speckled bushes amuse us in the foreground, and the fanciful Perugino tree

has absolutely disappeared. Nor, again, have we the senseless, ornamental tea-garden style of Bazzi. In the good Frate's landscape, on the contrary, everything is true and harmonious, up to its intention, which is to be simple, calm, consistent, and real,—real, and yet breathing an idyllic beauty.

Lucca is well known as the treasure city of Bartolommeo's works. Two pictures, though a third has greater pretensions, show his qualities to admiration. The St. Stephen of the Duomo is one, and it displays a landscape under a deep-toned twilight, a single tree lifts itself against the sky, one wreath of thin smoke rises from a gray convent, where the supper that follows the Angelus is preparing.

FIG. 88.—LANDSCAPE OF THE ST. CATHERINE: FRA BARTOLOMMEO.

There is a soft blending of shapes and tones as becomes the even-tide, and the whole shows a power of generalisation new to this branch of art. The other picture, *St. Catherine of Siena with the Magdalen*, now in the Pinacoteca, is perhaps yet more beautiful in its landscape of very simple elements. (Fig. 88.) A road descends a low brow to a stream, crossed in the distance by an old stone bridge; a solitary boat is moored to the shore, and some buildings, looking like those of a deserted inn once busy with the traffic of a ferry, stand on the road, and abut upon the water; a group of trees casts shade upon the foreground, and again a wavering column of smoke ascends and breaks the horizon line, which is one long low distant hill. Nothing could be more harmonious and poetic, so far as it goes, with all its simple reality. The trees, it will be noted,

are those of the ordinary wayside, walnut or elm, and form dark masses of foliage. There is a singular absence of figures: they would perhaps, to Bartolommeo's mind, have disturbed the sense of quietude; the only sign of life or movement in fact, for there are no clouds, being the column of smoke, a picturesque incident, anticipative of Titian, who constantly introduces it in his landscapes.

In two small pictures in the Uffizi—*The Nativity and the Presentation*, linked together—there is a delightful landscape in miniature, clear and well drawn, if somewhat hard. The Pitti, along with its great Bartolommeos, in which landscape has no place, possesses a small "round," *The Saviour with Saints*, with an excellent dim distance, in which form is eliminated, but the effect of twilight over an extensive sweep of country is admirably given. In Lady Eastlake's edition of *Kugler* we read: "The Frate is known to have executed a Holy Family for Agnolo Doni, with a charming landscape, supposed to be the one now existing in the Corsini Palace." The landscape, however, of the Corsini picture is so utterly disappointing that one must needs doubt its identity. It is a commonplace, poorly-touched view of a hill and a tree, a cottage and a castle, with formless haze for clouds. If genuine, the supposition is that it must have been destroyed by cleaning—it has, indeed, a washed-out look.

There is a celebrated *Holy Family*, by Bartolommeo, at Panshanger. Here, in the landscape, there are some foreign elements which have been attributed to the influence of Raphael in his earlier time, though a fragment of ruin that rises with some formality behind the head of the Madonna might suggest his later style. A palm tree fills up the canvas on one side, painted with excessive pains; on the other, a broken bank, and heavy, flaky foliage; the sky is crude with strong blues, reds and yellows, so that the whole, in its hard and polished brilliance, has an archaic look, and though splendid at a distance for its colour, lacks simplicity. There is little to remind us of the Bartolommeo landscape, unless it be the turn of road, whereon two travellers seem making for home in the village nestling at the foot of the hill.

Bartolommeo's manner underwent more than one change, and it is to be regretted that in his later pictures he seems to have preferred, not scenery, but gorgeous architecture for his background. So long as he was left in the peace of his convent, and when he knew little of the world beyond the valley of the Arno, we have, for

the most part, these delicious outlooks upon peaceful nature; nor did his first recorded journey, which was to Venice, alter this; there he would find landscape predominant, whether in the works of old Bellini, of Giorgione, or of Titian, who was born in the same year with himself; and the St. Catherine of which the landscape has been already described, was originally painted for the vicar of the convent of Murano. But after Rome it was different; and we may imagine that the sight of splendid ecclesiastical ceremonial, and admiration of the great works of the classical Renaissance, combined to urge the Frate towards the pomp of throne and baldachino, of pillar and pilaster. Bartolommeo has worthy place near to the very greatest in the hierarchy of art; but for the ill-health of years, a long resignation of his pencil after the martyrdom of Savonarola, and death when only forty-two, he might have sat beside the greatest.

MARIOTTO ALBERTINELLI (1474-1515) was the comrade and partner of the Frate, and in the predella to Albertinelli's lovely picture of the *Visitation* in the Uffizi, is a landscape of exactly the same character as that of his friend. There is a gray convent with a stream encircling it, one tree standing in a meadow, a low soft horizon, and a low sweet light; one might fancy it some English abbey, with its peaceful stream, which the painter was lovingly recalling. Both painters, indeed, as it seems to us, prefer scenery of the sort familiar in rural England.

ANDREA DEL SARTO (1487-1531) was a pupil of Piero del Cosimo, along with Bartolommeo and Albertinelli. Without the dignity, but with greater grace, and a charm of colour which no other Florentine could equal, Andrea reminds us of Bartolommeo. One would have been glad if such a colourist and master of blending tones had spent more of his fine powers upon landscape, if less upon charming drapery; but one gathers, from his life as well as his works, that the fascinations of that lovely but light spouse of his, Lucretia, were too much for him, even to her garments. He was too able a man, however, not to do well what he attempted, and his landscape, in which the influence of Cosimo has been recognised, shows generally the breadth of a master, and sometimes poetical effect. Of this last quality we have an indication in the background to the portrait of Petrarch's Laura at Panshanger. It is slight, but in its dim twilight,

in the mountain peak that rises against the dull red gleam beyond, in the slender tree stretching its boughs into the gloom, and the "Castello" faintly touched with dying light, there is a fine suggestion in harmony with the grave melancholy of the countenance.

Of a different description are the landscapes in his two pictures of the *Life of Joseph* in the Pitti, where he adopts a style archaic in thought and feeling, though not so in touch and tone. In these the distant mountains, dolomitic in character, are done with great delicacy and care; one group is swathed in mist (as we shall find in Correggio), but the foregrounds are hot and brown, and encumbered with objects and incidents. There is a want of light and air, and of simplicity in composition. A truer specimen is in the large *Pietà* (No. 58) of the same gallery, which shows a fine, simple, solemn sweep of landscape, free from any trivialities of common life to interfere with the hush of sorrow around the sacred form. An earlier work—the sweetly-painted *Annunciation* of the Pitti (124)—has a very lovely distance, skilfully managed. It contains a sharp mountain-shape against a bright light, and a most graceful group of trees. The landscape of the *Charity* of the Louvre, again, is full of breadth and simplicity. But, as a rule, in Andrea's landscapes we have not the calm feeling of Bartolommeo—the man himself was not calm in soul nor in life.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kugler says of the five large pictures in the court of the Annunziata at Florence that "one of their peculiar features is the beautiful landscape backgrounds." I regret that these have escaped my notice.



## CHAPTER XI.

### LANDSCAPE OF ITALIAN ART—THE RAPHAEL PERIOD.

Michael Angelo . . .	1474-5-1564.	Garofalo . . .	1481-1559.
Raphael . . .	1483-1520.	Lud. Mazzolino . . .	1478?-1528?
Correggio . . .	1493-4-1534.	Dosso Dossi . . .	1474?-1558?

WE have now reached the great culmination of art in the two who bear up that glory between them,—Michael Angelo, the scholar of Ghirlandaio; Raphael, the pupil of Perugino. In the former we must not look for landscape. BUONAROTTI (1474-5-1564), like Da Vinci, lived in a land of vision, and was still more than he—a seer. Earth was too small for him, and the scenery of earth, what could it be to him but such as, he complained to Vittoria Colonna, the Flemish painters made it—"tints, green-fields, trees, rivers, bridges, and landscapes filled with many scattered figures!" These things were but toys of art to him, and we must admit that such indeed they had been made by many. It has been well said that the imagination of Michael Angelo created a race of beings "foreign to and outside nature"; and if Leonardo's landscape has seemed to us so strange that it might belong to another planet, so most certainly might we think of Buonarotti's mighty incarnations. He might have brought them, shall we say, from far-off solitary Saturn, reached by him alone of men, a dim enormous world! And how was it possible to make such creatures at home among "green fields, trees, rivers, and bridges"? He never attempted it. In the cartoon of Pisa, masses of rock lean against each other in immovable majesty, and that is all. In the *Conversion of Saul* there appear in the distance the solid ramparts of Damascus and lonely hills. In the incomprehensible *Holy Family* of the Uffizi—his only condescension of the kind—there is something of a landscape, but it is depicted in simple blues, only rock and soil, hardly so much as a bush—just air and solitude! One thinks that the



sublimity of the level illimitable sea might have struck him; he must often have seen it from Carrara, but perhaps nothing but ocean in storm would have moved the depths of that unfathomable soul. One fancies that the snowy dome of Mte. Rosa would surely have held the gaze of him who raised the dome of St. Peter's, but doubtless he never saw Mte. Rosa other than as a spot of distant snow. It seems certain that Michael Angelo, always wrestling with his Titans, never saw in dumb rock, or tree, or the fleeting things of air, themes worthy of his art.

How different was RAPHAEL! (1483-1520). In him far more than in his great compeer we recognise that culmination of art of which we have spoken. For Michael Angelo was a separate soul, impatient of the very means by which he must express his brooding thoughts, and contemptuous of everything but design. In Raphael all qualities of art find place, and in a more even balance than the world has elsewhere seen. Higher still, no doubt, would have been his pedestal of fame, had his almost perfect art been associated with the intensity and simplicity of religious feeling which animated the pre-Raphaelites,—Giotto and Angelico, for instance,—if he could have supplied the skill they lacked, without losing their devoutness. In that respect Leonardo more nearly approached perfection, and had he left other works like the *Last Supper* he might have claimed without dispute the loftiest place in the whole realm of art. As it is, the wealth of Raphael in art-achievement gives him the pre-eminence.

Raphael's subjects are all human,—the loveliness of children, the grace, the refinement, the maternal dignity of womanhood; the ease, the majesty that may be expressed in the powerful forms of manhood, are what he delights to render. But he ventures also upon scenes of grand emotion, though always obedient to the spirit of beauty. It is in the service of beauty, and beauty of the highest order, that he spends his strength. What, then, was the landscape of so great a master? We must reply that it was not generally remarkable for other than that prevailing sense of beauty which led him to surround his Madonnas with a pure sky and smiling verdure, with pleasant hills and fields, the peaceful scenes of human habitation. In this, especially in his Madonna pictures, Perugino's pupil follows much in the spirit of his master. Raphael takes us to a sweet undulating country, a land of lovely afternoons, for he does not affect the deep twilight that others were so fond of; the fair

serene day was his delight, and the carpet of innumerable flowers. It would have been impossible for him to imagine the Virgin in a fearsome cave like Leonardo, or in some wild waste like Buonarrotti. But although in their general character the Perugino type prevails, the landscapes of Raphael show some curious differences in detail, and, moreover, display certain singular variations answering to changing circumstances and to his progress in art, exhibiting towards the last a great development of freedom and power.

Yet nothing is more difficult than to trace the landscape of Raphael chronologically, and exactly according to the influence of this or that master, amidst what Rumohr calls "the extremely varied phenomena of his early life." In the first place, however, we may observe as a fact of some interest, that a Flemish influence and example in the practice of oil-painting existed at Urbino in the days of Raphael's father, Giovanni Santi. It is recorded of Federigo, Duke of Urbino, who, in the latter half of the fifteenth century, built a palace there, that he disliked fresco, and preferred painting in oil, "and that not finding masters to his liking in Italy, because they did not know how to colour panels in oil, he sent to the Netherlands for a celebrated master whom he settled at Urbino." The painter referred to appears to have been Justus of Ghent, and we may take it as likely that pictures in the Flemish style, in which landscape took so large a place, were familiar to the boy Raphael, wandering through the palace halls of his father's princely patron.<sup>1</sup> A more direct and potent influence may perhaps be due to Timoteo Viti, now recognised as very probably the first master of the young Raphael at Urbino, and that ingenious writer, Morelli, thinks that he recognises Timoteo in "the structure of the landscape, so utterly unlike Perugino's," of one of Raphael's supposed earliest works (1500), the *Knight's Vision* at the National Gallery. But that landscape, with its miniature finish, blue mountains, brown bluffs of hill, and general want of air and light, reminds us more of some Flemish, or of German work, though the scenery, with its campanile and distant lake-mountains, is Italian—the latter somewhat of the Trasimeno character—while a study of the rock standing so prominently in the middle distance is said by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle to be amongst Raphael's sketches from nature.

<sup>1</sup> We are told that "two hundred views of cities and provinces represented the localities illustrated by the deeds of heroes." Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle's *Life of Raphael*.

The two small pictures, *St. George and the Dragon* and the *Archangel Michael*, both in the Louvre, might, from the archaic character of their landscape, be assigned to an earlier date than that which has been given to them—1504. In the former there are indeed trees of the Perugino type, but the near hills are soft cushions of verdure, the distant ones soft blue; soft blues and greens, in fact, pervade the whole, and there is no skill in composition. It looks as if Raphael, almost a boy, had here imitated, but in a feeble way, some pattern of landscape of quite a different sort from that of the "Knight." In the *St. Michael* the landscape certainly appears derived from a foreign source, and Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle suggest that in "the monsters that stalk about the ground, the penitents pursued by devils, the heavens red and black with the smoke of a burning castle," Raphael, to whom the subject was in no way congenial, had followed a print of one of Jerome Bosch's *Temptations*, in which "animals of quaint structure strut about regions fitfully lighted by fires burning in hideous caverns, and the sky is dark and lurid with many-coloured smoke." The burning buildings are certainly given with some feeling for picturesque effect, but the rest is very archaic, and we should be inclined to say that these pictures are too exceptional to have much relation to Raphael's progress in landscape. They illustrate rather what Morelli calls "the modest and feminine nature of the glorious youth," who, distrusting his own powers, followed now this, now that, manner of the schools.

Among instances of this early immaturity and imitation may be reckoned the *Crucifixion* at Dudley House, in which we are told "the beautiful lines of the undulating landscape, broken by cliffs and enlivened by trees, remind us of the same features in Pinturicchio's contemporary altar-pieces." There is certainly in this picture, considering the Perugino influence plainly marked in the figures, a very curious divergence from the Perugino type of landscape. The five trees have none of the Peruginesque delicacy and grace, but are bulbous masses of foliage raised upon a straight stem like a pole; and the hills, one of which is crowned by the towers of a small town, are deficient in the serene harmonious beauty that the elder master seldom failed to impart. In both trees and hills Pinturicchio might well have furnished the example, and so far, we should say, the landscape suffered.

The same immaturity and uncertainty appears in the *Coronation*

of the *Virgin* (1501-3) at the Vatican, the frittered landscape of which, all very green and blue, does not show a self-reliant hand. The *Solly Madonna* at Berlin, of about the same date, has not the unmistakable Perugino trees, but there is a great improvement upon those of the *Crucifixion*; of the four or five trees scattered upon a smooth bluff only one shows a slender stem with sparse foliage at top, and we may here point out that, though in later pictures there frequently occurs the idea of a tall stem and delicate sprays of leafage, Raphael does not fall into the stereotyped unreality of the true Peruginesque.

There was, however, a phase of his art in which Raphael avoided trees altogether. The *Vision of the Knight* has a treeless landscape; in which circumstance, and in its rocky character, there may possibly lurk an allusion to the stern duties awaiting the young soldier. Another instance is more remarkable. The *Three Graces* of the Dudley Gallery display their loveliness in no garden of delight, but in a solemn solitary scene, where distant hills under a cloudless twilight descend to a lonely stream, touched by a single gleam of evening. In the solitude there is something that reminds us of Leonardo, but there is a still beauty about the hills and winding

water that betrays a gentler nature. We might fancy that sweet vision of the classic time had suddenly been revealed to the youthful Raphael on some lonely height, when day was done, and the living world sunk out of sight! Was it that the pure simplicity of antique art which inspired the subject, ruled also Raphael's conception of an appropriate landscape?

But there are other evidences that Raphael at this early period felt the charm of solitary country. The "*Connestabile*" *Madonna*—now at St. Petersburg, and of much the same date as that assigned

FIG. 89.—LANDSCAPE TO LEFT IN  
THE "CONNESTABILE" MADONNA.

to *The Graces*, 1504-5—suggests the same impression, though it may illustrate also a transition stage, a blending of the solitary with the habitable and smiling. (Fig. 89.) On either side of the Virgin Mother lie solitary hills, those to the left subsiding to a soft vista, which ends in what may be either distant plain or sea.<sup>1</sup> On the right the hills rise one above another in smooth slopes, and the highest is white with snow, a truly remarkable effect in an Italian painting. So

far the still solitude is unbroken, but in this portion of the scene a single building stands under the shelter of two trees, and a path wanders from the doorway down to a piece of water, upon which is a small boat with two figures. (Fig. 90.) On the left, in the shadow of the hills, are two other figures, one on horseback, and here again are two or three slender trees, which, though like those of Perugino lifting their delicate branches against the still radiance of the cloudless sky, if frail, are by no means fanciful. They are free in their delicate leafage, and if this landscape speaks of Peruginesque motive, it, no less than that of *The Graces*, speaks of independent observation and individual feeling.

FIG. 90.—LANDSCAPE TO RIGHT IN THE "CONNESTABILE" MADONNA.

It is certain that, sooner or later, the young Raphael began to study landscape for himself, how early we may not know, for, though various sketches belong apparently to the Urbino country, they were probably made when, already an artist of reputation, he revisited his native district, as he certainly did in 1504. In these sketches the aspect of towns and castles seems chiefly to have interested him; very probably they were necessary as being the towns and castles of his patrons, who required their introduction in the subjects ordered. What is called the "Venice Sketch-book" supplies many of these, though it is fair to say that the Raphael authorship is disputed. Messrs.

<sup>1</sup> I once saw this picture, but do not remember it sufficiently to decide the above question; I write only from an engraving, the picture now being inaccessible.

Crowe and Cavalcaselle, however, have no doubt that in one we have the cathedral and castle of Urbino, with the moat and causeway, sketched from a place to the north of the palace; and that on the back of the same sheet is another characteristic view to the north-east. Raphael here, they say, "sat out on a spur, and drew the serpentine windings of the wall and its supports." In the Oxford Gallery (No. 175) they recognise Urbania, formerly Castel Durante, in a minutely finished drawing, showing an assemblage of battlemented towers and fortified palaces; but this, whether from Raphael's hand or no, does not look like a sketch on the spot. Another (No. 17) is far more interesting. It was intended for a background to a St. Jerome, and gives a very literal view of a fortified city, rising upon a hillside; a river washes the foot of its walls, and a lofty castle on the height defends the upper gate. A wooden bridge crosses the water to a drawbridge at the lower end, and a long street ascends thence to the gate at the top of the hill; in the distance is a level sea-line. Yet with all the verisimilitude, identification is difficult. Urbino and Perugia have been suggested; Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle hold to Fossombrone in the Urbino district, but the great difficulty is that unmistakable line of sea! Mr. Robinson is probably nearer the mark in thinking that the view "represents some one of the cities in the Duchy of Urbino on the Adriatic coast."

Some small sketches at Oxford of towers and spires surrounded by castle-walls rising out of water, the reflections slightly indicated, are supposed to refer to one and the same spot, Urbania, and are cited as showing "how dearly Raphael loved that landscape, how affectionately he dwelt on those towers and spires." The same authorities find these towers and walls repeated in the *Apollo and Marsyas*, now at the Louvre. (Fig. 91.)<sup>1</sup> The landscape here is of a different character from any yet noticed. There is a distant lake, somewhat similar to that of Perugino, but it is very unlike that of *The Knight* or the "Connestabile" *Madonna*. There are indeed points, both in the landscape and buildings, which have the look of northern art, and the slender, straight-stemmed saplings of the foreground, unless much earlier in date, can hardly have proceeded from the same hand as the slender but natural and graceful trees of the "Connestabile."

In the *Sposalizio* (date 1504) of the Brera we have an undoubted

<sup>1</sup> Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *Life of Raphael*, p. 153.

Raphael, and a landscape full of his radiant sweetness. Beyond that strange symbolic temple of Jerusalem, the idea of which he took from his master, who again had the Baptistery at Florence in his eye, Raphael spreads his landscape up to a high horizon; it recedes hill behind hill in the far still light, and rests in perfect calm. This high horizon is characteristic of Raphael's Madonna landscapes, as if he liked to expatiate on each pleasant scene. But

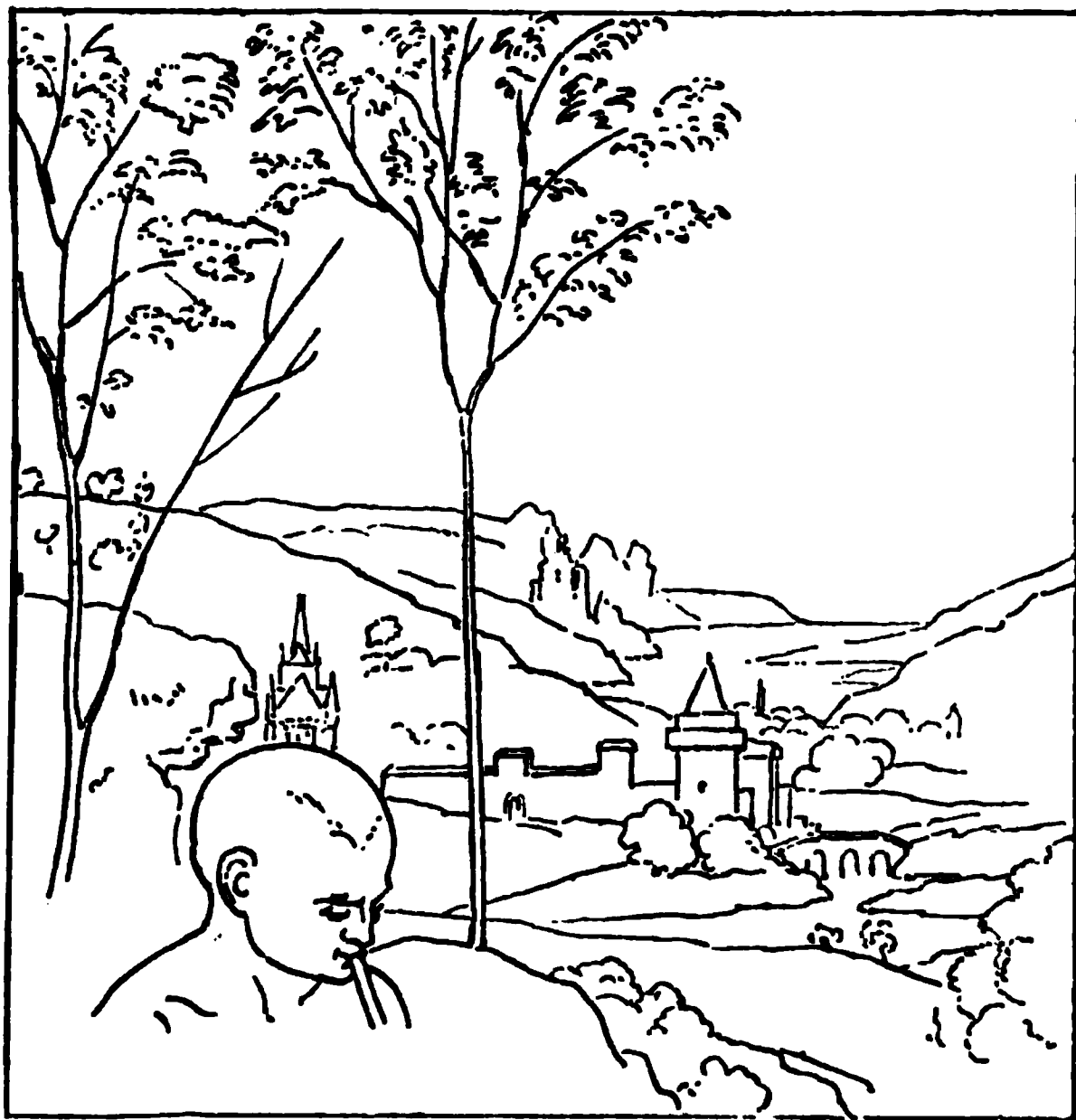


FIG. 91.—LANDSCAPE OF APOLLO AND MARSYAS: RAPHAEL.

we must follow him to Florence before we find the landscape of which he made most use.

At Florence, which he first visited in 1504, he came for a time under the powerful influence of Leonardo—the most learned mind that ever dealt with art. It is immediately apparent in his works, perhaps in none more so than in the *Madonna di Terranuova* at Berlin; and here be it observed, as at least a coincidence, we have not the undulating hills and vista of water, hitherto so common, but a severe study of rock, not indeed like Leonardo's strange formations, but nevertheless rock. It is, however, one of the confusing circumstances that attend our inquiry that Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle



discover in this rock a likeness "in its principal features to that in the Vision of the Knight," for which they find the study in the Venice Sketch-book. Yet Raphael, desiring to introduce a rock, may have made use of a study older in date. The city whose walls are carried up the hill on the other side may have been introduced for a local purpose only.<sup>1</sup>

In the portrait of Maddalena Doni at the Pitti, the influence of Da Vinci upon the disciple of Perugino has also been traced; not only had Raphael studied the precepts of the great Florentine, but he must, it is thought, have had the Mona Lisa before him. Raphael, say Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, "was unable to forget the splendid masterpiece of Leonardo, with its heavenly smile, its soft glance, and the twilight over-spreading form in a dreamy landscape of valleys and hills." Yet the differences between the two landscapes are very marked. Of the strange unearthly scenery of the Mona Lisa we have already spoken, "all peaks and rocks and stretches of still water." The Maddalena, on the contrary, shows a slight but sunny bit of landscape, the slopes of a hill, and a tree of the modified Peruginesque. While unlike Leonardo both in precept and practice, "you should choose," he said, "your horizon on a level with the eyes," Raphael has lowered it below the shoulders, and left the head free against the "light of the sky on which a few clouds quench the glare of the sun." If Raphael here followed any landscape of Da Vinci's, it was surely not that of the Mona Lisa, but the lovely scene, "soft yet precise, bright yet toned, and with but one flicker of cloud in the sky," which accompanies the portrait of the Nun in the same room at the Pitti as the Maddalena Doni. In this landscape Leonardo offered to his young admirer a variation upon the Perugino type, which he would fully appreciate, and to which it is possible we may attribute much of the charm in the Madonna landscapes.

One distinctive indication that Raphael was now following a new type of scenery, is the disappearance of anything like the Perugino lake or sea-line. Is it that he has not now before his eyes the long vista of the Tiber valley, or that of the Trasimeno Lake? Instead of the distant lake, water among meadows or wind-

<sup>1</sup> Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle see more of Michael Angelo than of Leonardo in this "Round," but it has not, we think, been noticed by critics how much the action of the left hand of the Madonna, in a rather difficult position, repeats that of our Lord's right hand in the *Last Supper*. Perugino, in a sketch that seems to have furnished the first idea, had indeed introduced something similar, but very stiffly.



ing among hills, and perhaps only indicated by a flash or soft gleam of light, is a very constant feature. It is so in the *Madonna di Tempi* at Munich, in the *St. Catherine* of the National Gallery, and, with a difference, in the *Madonna of the Meadow* at Vienna, where the Virgin is surrounded with a fair, open, untroubled scene, and a lake with islands appears in soft morning mist. We may note here, as symptomatic of an early work (the date is 1506), an unreal blue crag, which also is claimed by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle as resembling that of the *Knight's Dream*. On the other hand, the influence of Leonardo is traced in the Leonardesque haze thrown over the sun.<sup>1</sup>

The *Holy Family, with the Lamb*, at Madrid, is another picture in which a predominant Leonardo influence is discovered, and if here there is mention of a lake, the description ranks it with the sheets of water that diversify the scenery in the last-mentioned subjects. "The landscape is as lovely as it is minute, with its large weeds in the foreground, the lake and the road along its banks, the castle on a hill, with a church and tower in the low ground, and a flight of birds in the sky, beneath which a distant chain of blue mountains is seen."<sup>2</sup> Raphael's lakes at this time are certainly more of the nature of ornamental water than of those large and still expanses stretching to a sky-line that we find in Perugino.

But he did not desert Perugino's favourite idea of a young and slender tree lifting itself in delicate definition against a diaphonous sky, although, as already said, he renders it with more freedom and naturalness. In the famous *Cardellino* at Florence four trees of this kind are set primly enough in the midst of a soft landscape of low hills, the locality of which we cannot mistake, since Giotto's campanile and the dome of Sta. Maria del Fiore rise at their foot. In *La Belle Jardinière* at the Louvre the scenery again is quite that of the populous and cheerful Arno country, the river winding at the foot of hills; the trees here have lopped stems. All these pictures of Raphael's Florentine period show the most conscientious finish, even to the homeliest detail; the *St. Catherine* in the National Gallery is almost Dutch in this respect, as, for instance, the row of stakes and the reflections in the water. All are filled, too, with the most lucent atmosphere, avoiding the rich

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Raphael*, i. 260. In Kugler's *Handbook* this influence is also traced in "the deep brownish tones of the landscape," a description which certainly does not agree with my recollection.

<sup>2</sup> Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *Life of Raphael*, p. 388.

twilight of Perugino. Raphael's *Madonnas* have stepped into the open air, and are to be loved rather than worshipped.

The celebrated *Entombment* of the Borghese Gallery belongs to the Florentine period of Raphael's work, bearing the date of 1507, but in this picture the landscape is hard, cut up, flat, and "papery." In the midst stands a tree more conventional than usual with Raphael; the banks are smooth and cushiony, the clouds formless and scattered as Perugino often painted them; there is, however, no lake, only a stream. One can find nothing to admire except the aërial perspective of the far-receding mountains. Altogether, we must venture to call this a disappointing picture, full of laboured academical study, but its history may throw some light upon its deficiencies. It was a commission—apparently an early one—from a lady at Perugia; it was long in hand; the design was altered again and again. It was too severe a subject to be congenial to Raphael's years and temperament, yet he felt it an opportunity for making use of the learned art with which he was becoming acquainted at Florence. There was Da Vinci, with all his rules for correct drawing, especially of figures in motion; there were works by Buonarrotti to stir emulation; Mantegna and Signorelli he had already come across. Surely in this difficult composition, larger in size than he was then accustomed to, we find the result of an undigested mass of impressions contending with immature powers of execution? The unsatisfactory nature of the landscape may be due in the same way to unassimilated Florentine elements. The date probably designates only that of its final despatch to its Perugian destination, and not the period of its painstaking composition.

Raphael's Roman period shows a great development of dignity and power. The ease and sweep of his hand in the great Vatican frescos reveal maturity of all kinds, and with this the simple, smiling, and somewhat archaic scenery presently disappears. In the *Disputa* there is a lovely restful scene, in which the contour of the hills as they fall back from an expanse of water is charming; in the nearer portion to the left the scenery is of Perugino's conventional sort, and we have straight-stemmed trees, along with free and graceful foliage. This fresco, it should be observed, was the earliest of his great works. Nor does the *Poetry* yet show the freedom he was attaining. In the *Repulse of Attila*, however, he dismisses the conventional altogether, and introduces Roman ruins,

the Coliseum, one of the aqueducts, and the old walls of the city, in a picturesque group. Ruins, after Raphael's removal to Rome, frequently appear; they seem immediately to have attracted his attention, for they are introduced in the "Esterhazy" *Madonna* at Pesth, supposed to have been taken by him in an unfinished state from Florence; and when we read of the "cone of a mountain rising into the sky"—introduced in that picture—we ask whether this also has not come from the noble Roman horizon, so different from that of Florence? Another instance of the introduction of Roman ruins occurs in the *Madonna au Linge* of the Louvre, where massive walls, crowned by an archway, almost fill up the background.

In the Loggie there is no extensive landscape, and no attempt at poetical effects of light and shade. The ornamental character prevails, but the series includes many bright and graceful scenes. One charming little view is seen through a window in the *Joseph and Pharaoh*, and in the blank window-spaces are some torrent-scored hilly landscapes that show almost a romantic feeling. But pressed as Raphael now was with work, one may suspect in such accessories other than Raphael's hand.

The same suspicion may attach to the backgrounds of the cartoons, though at least the general idea would be the master's, and in this we find a largeness and freedom differing much from the symmetrical simplicity of the earlier style. There is certainly a good deal of the ornamental; domes, towers, ruins, are disposed in profusion upon green slopes, as in the *Charge to Peter*, where also some fanciful trees are introduced among other greenery. Still, there is picturesque arrangement of woodland, there are old walls, banks, scrambling bushes; and, from among the roofs of a town, what looks like the smoke of a sudden fire, that streams into the summer sky. By far the best, however, of the cartoon landscapes is that of the *Sacrifice at Lystra*. In this a range of hills descends abruptly to a lake or seashore in one soft silhouette of shadow, which rests also upon the buildings of a town below, one dark tower alone rising into the sky. Here, instead of the ornamental, we have a true natural scene rendered at a happy moment, an inspiration that was surely Raphael's own.

It is in panel-paintings that we may be more certain of the master, and among those executed in the concluding period of his life there is an extraordinary development of landscape-power. There

are evidences, however, of a transition period. In the *Madonna di Foligno* at the Vatican there is a view of Foligno under a rainbow, and an evident attempt at reality combined with artistic arrangement; the buildings and the mountain are well grouped, and the forms of the latter are carefully rendered; but the whole is wanting in unity of effect—the incident of the rainbow is too isolated. The same tentative appearance may also perhaps be detected in the *Madonna del Passeggio* of the Bridgewater Gallery. Whether it be the actual handiwork of Penni or not, we may conclude that we have Raphael's intention in the landscape; and here, while there are vivid blues and greens, which show a very different feeling from that expressed by the still radiance of an earlier period, we have also an indication, as in the "Foligno" *Madonna*, that he was now interested in cloud-effects. A rocky hill, up the flanks of which there creeps a town, is partly lost in a gloom of cloud, while nearer the eye a green slope catches a bright gleam. Some water winds in the mid-distance, returning flashes of light in the manner characteristic of him. Far more interesting than these is the landscape of the "Aldobrandini" or "Garvagh" *Madonna* at the National Gallery. Nothing can be more perfect in pictorial effect than the old wall, the distant roofs, the gleams of light on water, and the exquisite tones of gray; a comparison with the *St. Catherine*, hanging near, will show the advance that had been made. Judging from a copy in the Siena Academy of the "Perla" *Madonna* at Madrid, Raphael there introduced a romantic evening landscape, with streaks of delicate cloud in the sky, the dying light illuminating buildings, a singular variation from his manner, and an effect far better managed than the Foligno rainbow.<sup>1</sup> But no subject, we think, is more significant of the change that had taken place in Raphael's dealing with landscape than the *Vision of Ezekiel* in the Pitti. Beneath the thunderous rolling bulks of purple cloud that sustain the Almighty, is displayed a solemn stretch of mundane scenery. A forest tree, such as we find in Bartolommeo, but hardly anywhere else among these Florentine and Roman schools hitherto, rises from the foreground, with a rich mass of umber-tinted foliage, and mingles above with the cloudy darkness. To the left of this ascends a grassy slope, fringed along the summit

<sup>1</sup> Muntz, in his *Life of Raphael*, says that at this time Raphael was endeavouring in complicated effects of light to emulate the Flemish painters; he quotes the *Deliverance of St. Peter*, the "Impannata" *Madonna*, and "the splendid effect of dawn in the Perla to support his assertion." The impression given me by the Siena copy was certainly that of evening, a time of day also more suitable to the repose of the subject.

with a gloom of trees, as it might be the outskirts of a forest tract. On the right is a dim expanse of country, lost to sight in the extreme distance, illumined here and there with a ray that issues from the impending cloud, and showing hints of buildings, and windings of water at the foot of wooded hills, that break now and then in crags, faintly seen. (Fig. 92.)

Here, then, is something to which it would be hard to find a parallel in any of the painters hitherto passed in review. Not till we reach the perfected landscape-art of Venice shall we find the like. It is imaginative in a high degree; the conception is fine in itself, and the definition is sufficient to be suggestive and no more; yet it is entirely true to many an effect over a wide champaign

FIG. 92.—LANDSCAPE OF THE VISION OF EZEKIEL: RAPHAEL.

country seen beneath low hung masses of cloud. It is imaginative in a still higher degree in the idea it seems intended to convey of the world, with all that therein is, spread darkly beneath the eternal throne, yet visited now and again with beams from the unseen glory. This, in fact, is the grand style in landscape reached at a bound, a flight beyond the range not only of Perugino but of Bartolommeo, and as much beyond the early aims of the master himself.

In these later pictures alone do we find the attempt to render landscape effects, and if Raphael had lived, we should not perhaps have been so ready to consider a simple, sunny, somewhat monotonous sweetness the characteristic feature of the Raphael landscape.

We have followed a line of art which may be called the Florentine, although the Sienese, the Umbrian, and the Milanese have been associated with it as side currents, mingling with the

main stream more or less. One more name of renown (and a few of lesser note) must be brought into review before leaving this branch of our subject. It is difficult to assign a place in any direct line of art to CORREGGIO (1494-1534), for, like his birthplace—which lies apart, yet midmost of the great art-centres—he stands alone, clearly influenced on the one hand by the chiaroscuro and the smiling countenances of Da Vinci, and on the other by the wonderful foreshortening skill of Mantegna; while his colour has a lustrous quality independent of any school or teacher, unless it be that Francia's jewel-splendour gave him the hint. That he was never in Rome, never hardly anywhere except at Correggio and Parma, is a singular illustration of his seclusion and independence. Raphael was ten years old at Correggio's birth, Titian sixteen, Michael Angelo twenty, and Da Vinci forty, so that he was the youngest of the mighty ones.

From one whose exquisite perception of the brilliance and play of light, and of its infinite gradations, ranks him with the greatest in art, we look for something commensurate in landscape, and that something we find. It is exactly the landscape of a man who enjoyed light and air and grace. The charm of pearly tints and softly-rounded limbs contributes to the fascination of his lovely, lively groups of saints and angels, goddesses and children; and these creations could only find their appropriate surroundings under soft morning skies, and amid luxuriant leafage.

That one of Correggio's most famous pictures should by common consent be called *Il Giorno* is characteristic. It is the freshness and yet tenderness of morning, and the mists of the morning, in which he delights. In that picture, the glory of the Parma Gallery, a soft gray hill is partly swathed in level films of cloud, buildings are faintly emerging from a gray gloom, the tone of the sky is exquisite. We must confess that everything is put in broadly, with a too sweeping brush, and consequently the near foliage is carelessly conventional. Yet, if you turn to the first open window in the Gallery, and look out upon Parma on a cloudy, but not gloomy day, you will see the very tints of the picture.

But if, with all its charm, there is much show and dash in *Il Giorno*, the landscape of the *Danae* in the Borghese Gallery at Rome is, on the contrary, delightfully simple, and poetical in its simplicity. The top of a ruined building rises in front, and beyond it a hazy dawn is stealing over a calm scene.

More complex, but of great beauty, is the landscape of the *Virgin adoring the Infant Christ*, in the Tribune of the Uffizi. (Fig. 93.) On the Italian Mediterranean shore there is surely somewhere to be seen that upright rock, beyond it the level sea, and landward those richly-verdured sloping hills, with a building here and there upon a knoll. Not unlikely objects too in such a scene are the palm, lifting its feathery crown on the one side, and the fig, stretching from an old wall, on the other. And on the morning of a summer

FIG. 93.—LANDSCAPE OF CORREGGIO'S MADONNA, TRIBUNE, FLORENCE

day you may see all this in the warm haze that Correggio chose for it. Who would not wish to climb the broken steps of the ruin that blocks out so much of this lovely scene, and gaze his fill upon the growing day!

We must not forget the counterpart of *Il Giorno*—*La Notte* at Dresden. Here "the whole world lieth in darkness," the one true Light now shineth, and the shepherds adore. No earthly dawn as yet appears, or only enough to reveal certain indistinct shapes in the dark obscure. Correggio is by no means all of the "day," for, besides the *Notte*, there is a *Deposition* at Parma—the figure of the



Saviour wonderful, and the landscape a monotone of gray gloom. So also in the *Martyrdom of St. Placido* and *Sta. Flavia* there is a strange weird background of soft glooms and suggested forms.<sup>1</sup>

There is much exuberance in Correggio; he so ran riot with legs and arms that somebody likened the crowding angels in the cathedral dome at Parma to a "hash of frogs." There is much false sentiment, as where, in the *Giorno*, the lovely girl presses her cheek against the little limb of satin softness; you would never judge till you were told that the girl is the Magdalen, and the child the Christ! All the more surprising, therefore, is the simplicity and delicate sobriety that often obtain in his landscape. Such qualities must imply real feeling; though an uneasy suspicion occasionally intrudes that an artistic perception of suitableness to background guided the rapid brush. Or was it that the singular melancholy attributed to Correggio here sometimes found expression?

GAROFALO, or BENVENUTO TISIO (1481-1559), of Raphael lineage in art—for he closely imitated and sometimes assisted him—takes us across Italy to Ferrara, of which school he is the chief. His cabinet pictures are always worth looking at, his genius seeming to evaporate when he attempted to cover large surfaces, and it is in his smaller subjects that we find really delightful landscape.

In a *Holy Family* at the National Gallery there is a silvery scene—morning, perhaps; a town reposes in the early mist, and sharp blue mountains rise in the distance. In the Louvre are good specimens: No. 415—*The Infant Christ asleep*—shows mountain peaks, crags which catch the light, and a wandering stream. In 416—*The Virgin adoring the Infant Saviour*—there are abrupt mountain-forms, and high pitched brown roofs in front of them; the whole rich in colour, and good in composition. In a *Holy Family* (414) he gives a sort of Sorrento view, very delicate and clear in touch, and very full of the picturesque. But it is in the simplest scenes that he excels. In a *Nativity* at Parma there is a peep through a small arched window, perfect of its kind: a road winds beside a meadow to a small town, seen through an opening among trees, which lies at the foot of purple hills that cut sharply against a clear evening sky; some sheep are clustered on the sward in the

<sup>1</sup> The Correggios at Apsley House and the Stafford Gallery I have been unable to see before going to press. At the former is one of his finest works; the picture at the latter is described by Kugler as containing "a glowing landscape."



foreground, and the shepherd stands on watch; there is the same air of quiet truth that you find in Bartolommeo. A similar window-peep in a picture at Loreto shows another charming scene: an old castle on a cliff in shade is touched along the edges with a soft light, soft clouds rising behind; in both is the very poetry of truth.

Lord Penrhyn has a *Holy Family*<sup>1</sup> in which the bright little landscape is captivating for its airy grace and tender primrose tints. Very true to nature are the blue flat-topped hills behind, and the trees clustered on a bank in front leave nothing to be desired.

After this experience of Garofalo's feeling for landscape, his large pictures, such as may be seen at Naples and the Borghese Gallery, are the more disappointing. In a *Pietà* at the Naples Museum the landscape is stiff and brown, with awkward rounded rocks, and hills curiously archaic; broad bars of shade across the sky are meaningless; there is no air, no distance, no unity. The same description and condemnation apply to his large *Deposition* in the Borghese. On the other hand, the Borghese possesses one or two of his smaller and choicer works. In a *Resurrection of Lazarus*, mountains and woodland plain are delicately given, with the light of evening, or of dawn behind. And in a *Marriage of St. Catherine* there is a wild poetical scene finely painted, with clear and simple light and shade. These smaller pictures must, we should think, belong to a time when the smaller pictures of Raphael had so influenced Garofalo, that some similar works of his have been attributed to the great master himself.

Two landscapes, "pure and simple," were in the now dispersed Sampieri collection at Bologna, reputed to be painted "in fine taste and with abundance of force." We may judge, therefore, that Garofalo might have been noted as a landscape painter had the predilections of his time lain that way.

LUDOVICO MAZZOLINO (1478?-1528?), another Ferrarese, and a fellow-scholar with Garofalo, may claim a word, were it only for an unpretending picture of his early manner in the Museum at Belluno, where, behind a *Madonna and Saints*, is seen a breadth of winding water under evening light; an old walled town on the farther shore, surely without inhabitants, for it shows no sign of life! one vessel riding forlorn at its anchorage—deserted too; one solitary tree rising in the centre of the picture, and low hills with single

<sup>1</sup> Exhibited at Burlington House in 1882.

towers on their summits guarding the abandoned region—the landscape of a dream !

Then, once more, there are Dosso Dossi and his brother Giambattista (1474?-1558?), also of Ferrara, and, like so many of these painters, originally from the studio of Lorenzo Costa. Both brothers have a certain reputation for landscape, the last more particularly; in either case it is difficult to see why. As for Giambattista, it is sufficient to look at the “two fantastic landscapes” (as Kugler describes them) from his hand in the Borghese Gallery. They offer a curious accumulation of objects and incidents, and except in colouring, which is cold and black, are obviously painted in imitation of Flemish examples. In one there is a long vista of a lake, or arm of the sea, with sloping wooded shores, and the near leafage is careful, but there is nothing worthy to be called landscape.

Of Dosso Dossi's picture in the same Gallery, *Circe*, Kugler praises “the beautiful forest landscape.” It is unfortunate that it hangs near Correggio's *Danae*, in comparison with which it looks a hard cut-up affair, with lights and shadows scattered aimlessly about; with no air, no repose, no harmony. Dresden has several of his works from which we gain no better impression. Of No. 135, the *Doctors of the Church*, our note-book reports—“a feeble muddled landscape of good component parts, such as the rocky bluff with towers and the distant sea, but heavy, cold, and dead.” Again, of *Justice with the Scales* (No. 131) the mention is—“clever bits put together, but without life or air.” The record is almost always the same. At the Brera is a *St. Sebastian*, “hard and cold, but with a clever bit of round-leaved foliage, and the distance bright in sunlight.” One would have altogether despaired of Dossi but for the *Adoration of the Magi* in the National Gallery, which, we are inclined to admit, contains a capital piece of mountainous landscape, rich in colour, and with gleams of light picturesquely striking upon water, and cottages in the foreground.

In Ferrara, Dossi, who painted largely in the interior of the Ducal palace, may be seen to more advantage; and if, as is said, Titian did him the honour to “assist” in a Bacchanalian scene, now much ruined, the landscape, no doubt, would have been more to our mind.

It is clear that we have reached the utmost outcome of landscape in this series of schools. We have travelled from Duccio

and Giotto to Raphael and Correggio, and we are warned by the Dossi that there is nothing to tempt us farther in this direction. The impetus of Florentine art is spent. But we have seen that most of the great men in art did something for landscape before it reached an independent position. We have noted some principal stages in its development, as it was dealt with successively by Masaccio, Ghirlandaio, Perugino, Bartolommeo, Raphael, and Correggio. We have seen how rapidly landscape began to sink with the decline of art-power into feeble, though, in a way, clever technicality. But if we turn to another part of Italy, if we seek the soft yet luminous skies of Venice, we shall discover a surprising efflorescence of landscape. Before, however, dealing with this rich and fascinating portion of our subject it will be well to return upon our course, and look at that German school whose influence in landscape was not to be unfelt even at Venice.

## CHAPTER XII.

### GERMAN LANDSCAPE OF THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES.

Wilhelm of Cologne . . .	-1378?	Sebald Beham . . .	1500-1550.
Stephan Lochner . . .	-1451.	Bartel Beham . . .	1502-1540.
Master of the Lyvers-		Hans Baldung . . .	1476 ?-1545.
berg Passion . . .	...	Nicholas Manuel . . .	1484-1531.
Martin Schongauer . . .	1440 ?-1488.	Albrecht Altdorfer . . .	1480 ?-1538.
Michael Wohlgemuth . . .	1434-1519.	Mathias Grunewald . . .	-1530 ?
Albrecht Dürer . . .	1471-1528.	Melchior Feselen . . .	-1538.
Hans Kulmbach . . .	-1522?	Lucas Cranach . . .	1472-1553 ?
Hans L.' Schüfelein . . .	1477 ?-1549.	Hans Holbein, the elder . . .	-1524.
Hans Burgkmair . . .	1473-1531.	George Pencz . . .	1500-1550.
Hans Holbein . . .		Hans Holbein . . .	1498-1543.

GERMANY owed much in art to proud Flanders. That Flemish influence should have been more immediate and effective than Italian is remarkable, considering the close connection between South Germany and Italy; but, besides political, commercial, and ethnical relations, there was something in the homely realism of Flemish art that suited the German temper—a temper, however, superior in intellectual elements to that of the Flemings.

It is by the Rhine that, coming from Flanders, we reach the German Land, and at Cologne we must delay to notice a school of older date than that of the Van Eycks. In the second half of the fourteenth century there belonged to this school a WILHELM OF COLOGNE; to whom it is believed the Van Eycks were indebted, as Wilhelm himself had been, to the earlier miniaturists, from whose gold grounds he could not escape, and whose landscape he followed. It is in vain, however, that we seek to attach his name, except very conjecturally, to any one work, and we can only with safety speak of pictures as belonging to his time. The dates begin about 1380, and one would like to believe that a considerable improvement in

trees over those of earlier works of the school, in which the uncouth style of mediæval illumination prevails, was due to this painter. If the *Madonna with the Bean-flower* (Cologne Museum) be by him, and other pictures in which flowers and thistles appear, Wilhelm had a delicate perception so far of nature's loveliness; and it is certain that trees in some pictures of his date, as in an *Entombment* (No. 57) and a *Madonna and Child* (No. 91), possess a noticeable freedom.

In a *St. Anthony*, a little later, about 1400 (Cologne Mus.) we have rocks of the Giotto kind, warm brown colours, and, instead of the gold ground, a gray-blue sky, with golden stars; but this alternation of the gold ground with the blue obtains, as we have seen, to a late date in manuscript.

About half a century later than the time of Wilhelm, there appears at Cologne (say 1440) another name of note in STEPHAN LOCHNER, who, "with his wife Lysbeth," came down the Rhine from Constance to the great Rhine city; his chief work, the *Adoration of the Kings*, is preserved in the cathedral. Like Wilhelm, however, he is more the dimly-seen chief of a group than one whose works can be certainly identified. If the *Madonna of the Rose-Garden* in the Museum be by him, we may judge that he, or some one, was fond of roses—it is about all that we can say for his landscape; and, as there is no sky to his garden, it does not go for much. In a *Last Judgment* of his date a bit of rock and herbage improve upon Giotto's type, as might well be expected with Van Eyck examples so close at hand, but the landscape tendency finds small place as yet in Cologne.

An unknown painter, called the MASTER OF THE LYVERSBERG PASSION, from a picture of that subject formerly in the Lyversberg collection, follows at the end of the fifteenth century. At Munich are two pictures attributed to him. In the *St. Joachim and St. Anna at the Golden Gate* (613) bright blue mountains are put upon a ground of gold, but the painter carefully gradates the tints to a foreground of green, and charmingly depicts with miniature finish some distant buildings. In the *Visitation of Elizabeth* (617) there is, the catalogue says, "a beautiful landscape with towns," etc., and, we may add, a most graceful arrangement of distant trees on alps at the foot of mountains. The Cologne Museum claims this master

for several pictures. In one of them, a *Deposition*, we again find graceful trees sprinkled about bright-green fields.

But by this time Flemish art was entirely overpowering that of Cologne, and its influence is especially visible in landscape. It is indeed the painter of the so-called *Lyversberg Passion* who, in one of the pictures at Munich, has actually copied the landscape of Stuerboudt's *Martyrdom* at Louvain; so that it is pretty evident that Cologne had no landscape properly its own, though we may quote a few specimens by nameless masters of what is still called the "Old Cologne School." In the *Vision of St. John* (No. 177) two bits of landscape in either corner are full of pale sweet light and gradation, while reflections in still water exercise the painter's skill, as they evidently charm his fancy. This clear pallor in the light reminds us that it is the Van der Weyden rather than the richer Van Eyck colouring that pervades this school of delicate feeling but feeble execution. Then, again, in *Jehovah upon His Throne* (169) the landscape below is not without striking effects. There are dark mountains, and a dark lake with sloping hills, excellently done; gleams of light are lost amid the gloom, and trees against the gloomy lake are touched with light. But this landscape is exceptional. A great altar-piece in five compartments (172), dealing with the legend of St. George and that of the holy Hippolytus, has the most characteristic landscapes. There is a soft, tender, airy distance, a sky intense in colour, but gradated, soft olive-green hills in front, and pollard willows, as well as a tree very much like the Perugino tree; there is much diffused daylight, but no light and shade. In the centre portion there is a very pleasing distance of water and blue hill, but all the foregrounds consist of smooth shaven hillocks with hard edges, because without any rounding shade. Yet this is said to date from 1470, when Memlinc was painting at Bruges; if so, Cologne clung singularly to the quaint simplicities of earlier days, which, however, did not prevent an exquisite presentment of flowers—thistle, mullen, poppy, etc. We constantly find that these early men could not compass the free generalisation requisite for middle distance or foreground, while the extreme distances were often charmingly given, the reason being, that these were generalised for them by distance itself. With much delicate feeling, the Cologne school faded soon, like a solitary rose-leaf dropped in the busy ways; and in landscape its history only shows that the source of life was entirely with the Flemings.

At Colmar, in the upper Rhine country, we find a great master of the fifteenth century in MARTIN SCHONGAUER, born supposedly about 1440, and dying in 1488. German art is distinctly linked with Flemish through him, for he studied under Van der Weyden at Brussels; but he had little interest in the landscape of the Flemings—he sometimes even preferred a gold ground. There is, however, a *Madonna and Child* at Munich, containing a mountain landscape with a streamlet and a flock of sheep.<sup>1</sup> And at the National Gallery the very striking picture of the *Death of the Virgin* shows through a window a view of an old German market-place, gem-like in its vivid lights and darks, but without the glow of Van Eyck's atmosphere.

In his engravings landscape is a more frequent feature, and suggests that wilder, opener, sterner style of it, which we shall find in German art; one of his characteristics seems to have been a bare-branched, dead, or winter tree. We should observe, too, that Schongauer supplies us with an interesting example of the relation between early panel-painting and manuscript art, for in his *Annunciation* at Colmar the supernatural clouds surrounding the divine apparition are exactly of that singular furbelowed sort common in the manuscripts. Schongauer and Perugino are said to have been in the habit of exchanging sketches, not, we may think, altogether to the advantage of the latter, if his oddly-knotted and singular draperies can be traced to "Il bel Martino," as the Italians called the German master. However that may be, it is certain that upon the art of South Germany he exercised a commanding influence.

Let us now move on to where "Nuremberg the ancient" stands, the centre of Franconian art. Small pictures, described as early examples of this art, are to be met with entirely in the style of the miniatures. Of course, the landscape is but an adjunct to sacred or legendary story, but there is sometimes a good deal of it. Saints or martyrs occupy the foreground; angels, their fluttering pinions gay with all the dyes of Paradise, hover in the pure sky—a sky of exquisite blue rarely flecked with any cloud; below it the earthly landscape answers in its ethereal beauty, not to the earthly pain or strife, but to the celestial visitants. Set amongst bright sward are clumps of fir trees in freshest emerald tints—the fir trees apparently indicative of German rather than of Flemish origin. A

<sup>1</sup> See Schmidt's article in the "Dohme Series."



river or a lake winds in the distance, water, "the eye of landscape," being, as we have seen, a favourite means of brightness with these early northern men. Beyond, but not backed by the brilliant snow-ranges of the Flemings, are mountains of delicious blue; mountains tormented by no storms, obscured by no vapour, but standing row upon row in the sunshine, all clad in garments of rejoicing. And then by shore or lake or stream, or nestled in a verdant hollow, is the toy tower or fairy castle, every detail of barbican and battlement, drawbridge and portcullis, clean and tidy as if the work of fairy fingers, to meet some all-astonished sight! No blotch, no dust of battle, no stain of time rests upon those fair walls, nor ever shall! We have seen it often before in art, this fairy scene, and as fairies are soulless so is this landscape soulless. One is tempted to think that the artist cared only for grinding his colours pure, laying them on smoothly, and arranging combinations of the brightest things to be found about him on a sunshiny day.

But the landscape-art of Nuremberg developed into something very different from this. Its first great master, MICHAEL WOHLGEMUTH (1434-1519), is believed to have studied under Schongauer; and whether he visited Flanders or no when young, he certainly in his engravings copied works of the Flemish school, especially those of Van der Weyden; so that here again we trace the all-pervading Flemish influence. Yet from this solid serious painter we have neither a gay landscape like that of the miniaturists, nor the busy crowded scenery of the great Flemings. Strange to say, he often reverts to the gold ground—a sign, it may be, of the mechanical shop-work of which he is accused, but which did not prevent his receiving far higher prices for his pictures than Dürer ever obtained.

Wohlgemuth's landscape is somewhat interesting, particularly in its distances of lake and hill. He is fond of these elements of scenery, and of low hills showing over nearer slopes. Though inclined to be dark and heavy, there is often much sweetness in these lonely scenes. In the church of St. Lawrence, Nuremberg, there are three pictures attributed to Wohlgemuth, but of these, according to Dr. Waagen, one is wrongly assigned to him, and the other two belong only to his school. One of them has a landscape of mellow tone with a vista of lake to a distant horizon, and so far agrees with other known Wohlgemuths. Among those which are unquestioned is the Peringsdörffer altar-piece at the Moritz Capella. It has four divisions; that of the *Saints Rosalia and Margaretha*



shows a landscape with a lake and dark-blue hills, brown trees, and near rocks looking like carpentry. But the landscape of another, the *St. Bernard*, is described by Dr. Thausing as "peculiarly graceful and brilliant," the reflections of a building in water being carefully given. At Munich also there is a Wohlgemuth in which the early dawn of *The Resurrection* is effectively if crudely suggested, breaking from behind a clump of trees; in another portion of the work a sunrise sends its light streaming over meadows, a good landscape idea worked out with vivid colour—purples and rich olive browns—power in colouring being one of Wohlgemuth's distinctive excellences. It is, however, in the Schwabach altar-piece, executed when seventy-four years of age, that we appear to have Wohlgemuth's landscape at its best. Dr. Thausing praises one of the wings, that of *John the Baptist*, as containing landscape "very lovingly handled," "the trees and the distant water of the Jordan with its island, and the blue peaked mountains, all show industrious study of nature." These peaked mountains seem to indicate a change in his style, and, if studied from nature, excite our curiosity to identify them. But the chief interest in the landscapes of this often unsatisfactory master, differing as they do from the Flemish social realism, consists in the fact that they served as a platform for the noble landscape-art of the greatest of German artists, who worked for three years as an apprentice in Wohlgemuth's house, "in the upper storey and in the back room," at Nuremberg, and who always retained the greatest reverence for his master.

It is in ALBRECHT DÜRER (1471-1528) that we recognise the full force of the difference between the Fleming and the German, and not least in respect of landscape, which Dürer lost no opportunity of introducing in the backgrounds of his subjects, especially during his earlier period. Nor is it too much to say, as Dr. Thausing does, that "in Dürer the modern feeling began which sees in landscape the reflection of its own moods, and in the close study of it a refreshing sphere of mental activity." We would add that Dürer's own mood was remarkably reflected therein, as we shall endeavour to show.

Yet Dürer may sometimes strike us as making no advance upon his master Wohlgemuth in the matter of landscape; but this applies to his painting only, and we know that painting was not this great man's strongest side. Heavy, dark, and greeny blues too often prevail,

or if there be intense colour, as in his *Adoration of the Magi* at the Uffizi, there is no air. In this picture the ruin, which in those symbolical days was essential to any representation of the Nativity, is shown with every patch of mortar in the glaring brickwork, the result of painful labour; and the hill behind is piled with houses and castles, finished each of them with the utmost minuteness. The whole has as little sentiment as a piece of garish needle-work, but defects of this kind are not surprising in this his first great panel-picture, painted in 1504, at the age of thirty-three. The reputation

FIG. 94.—MOUNTAIN SCENE FROM THE ENTOMBMENT: DÜRER.

of Dürer in landscape cannot lie here. We understand it better as we look at his *Entombment* at the Moritz Capella, Nuremberg, a subject also repeated at St. Sebald's. (Fig. 94.) In the landscape of this picture the thoughtful, melancholic, mystical nature of the man comes out. It is a wild mountain-scene, admirably studied in its drawing and light and shade. The rocky summits rear themselves with lonely grandeur, the paler giants in the background; the lines of débris stretch from the foot of each stern mass with a truth that close acquaintance only could reveal; a narrow lake shows its cold waters winding in the wilderness below. We ask to what weird landscape had Dürer betaken himself from his comfortable house so

safe and snug within the gate at Nuremberg? Yet, as he travelled much, had done his four years' "wandering" in his youth, and twice, it is supposed, crossed the Alps to Italy, he might easily have passed and noted many a like scene. So had others passed who never thought of noting; so did Cellini a few years later, when he was nearly lost crossing the lake of Wallenstadt; the Italian has a deal to say about his horses, the boats, and his fellow-passengers, but never a word to betoken an eye like Dürer's for the solitary crags around.

This fondness for the wild and lonely is, however, shown more fully, and with a suggestion of personal interest, in his own portrait, one of the treasures of the Uffizi. (Fig. 95.) Though a young man comparatively, already he had sought such places, and surely intended to mark his special predilection by making a stern and solitary landscape, the one thing seen through the narrow slip of window at his side. It is a surprising composition, a scene of such utter sombre solitude, rendered with unwavering and painful truth. Under a cloudy sky is seen a rocky mountain, its ridges white with snow; hills and scarped precipices all desolate of life, but crested here and there with distant forest, come next; below is mournful water of leaden hue, bordered along either shore with close natural wood, where axe has never been; the foreground is but a barren rocky waste. No trace of habitation appears, unless it be one lonely tower on a hillside, beyond the dark lake-stream. This strange scene recalls Da Vinci's morbid imaginings; only here there is nothing fantastic—it is all an

FIG. 95.—VIEW IN DÜRER'S  
PORTRAIT AT THE UFFIZI.

absolute piece of nature, but in its loneliness more like to Labrador than Alp, or Apennine, or Franconian wild. It is in such a self-chosen landscape that we read the strength of a soul, weary of the green fields of Flemish art, as of gay illuminated legend, and that brooded rather on the homeless desert, to which perhaps, with his deep religious nature, he would sometimes fain have fled to lead the life of an anchorite. The different treatment of the snowy mountain-ranges is suggestive; not for their coruscations under sunny skies did he deck a far horizon with glittering peaks, as did Van Eyck; there is no sparkle in this scene of Dürer's,—nothing but the cold wind-swept summits, with a gloomy sky behind them!

Of a later time, and in different association, is a composition of a very different character—the exquisite landscape at the foot of the grand *Adoration of the Trinity* at Vienna. This is a lovely evanescent vision of the beauteous earth in harmony with the glory of the heavenly world—the splendour of adoring kings and prophets. He would not mar that glory by contrasting with it the gloomy scenes of this lower sphere; rather should it be the renewed earth, the land of peace and joy which should respond to the glory above. Fortunately, by this time, his technical skill was equal to the occasion. So we have a wonderful still sea, as of glass, its transparent tints of sheeny blues and greens veiling a mysterious depth. Three vessels are faintly seen on the horizon, the only sign of life; fair shores recede on either side—on the right hand meeting the waters with a rocky bank, on the left sloping down with green promontories and a smiling city. In the sky on this side soft night may be approaching, as on the other the light of morning seems to spread. The tenderness and delicacy alike of sky, of the distant shores, of the sea, where the reflections are of infinite complexity and variety, are beyond praise. Air and light fill all the scene, while in front some glowing meadows, broken only by a little pebbly piece of soil, give standing ground for the single figure of Dürer himself.

But with all this brightness there is great pathos, for it is all subdued and tremulous with neutral tints. And here one calls to mind that other scene, portrayed by Raphael in the *Vision of Ezekiel*, where the majesty of the Almighty is rendered by the clouds and darkness that are round about Him, and the world beneath lies shrouded in the shadow of His power. Raphael in this landscape

abandoned sweetness to support the grandeur of his subject by all the magnificence of art, but which, contrasted with the artlessness of Dürer, is less touching. Raphael's landscape at its sweetest is not so sweet as Dürer's, for it does not reach the same pathos. With a nature neither so wonderfully gifted nor accomplished as that of Raphael, may we not say that the soul of the German sounded depths the other never knew!

Let us look at another and different example of Dürer's pathos as well as imaginative power—the *Christ on the Cross* (Dresden). He gives the cross and the figure, nothing more, relieved against utter darkness. But from the low horizon a pale light strikes upwards and touches the skirts of the darkness with dying tints of crimson and gold. On the horizon itself is a dark blue hill and a level line of dark sea, which breaks with ghostly lines of surf along a dark shore. Some slender trees rise athwart the light, and are faintly illuminated as they enter the darkness above.<sup>1</sup> Here, though the landscape has nothing to do with the event historically, there is wonderful sympathy of idea, as well as perfection of painting.<sup>2</sup>

It is in small works like this that Dürer shines; but he was yet greater with the graver on a few inches of copper than with the brush on panel. With the thin black lines of the graving tool he could produce marvels of brilliance and miracles of detail. He is never tired of delineating the multitude of Nuremberg's towers, and high-pitched gables crowning the bluffs, mingled with clustering trees.<sup>3</sup> Quaint and massive, the defences of the *Feste Bourg* ever rise against the sky as he had seen and welcomed them on his homeward journeys, tired with the long ways of wilderness, haggard with sad forebodings. But from those far ways he brought recollections also of the great and wide sea, or of lakes whose shores were limitless, where the surpassing delicacy of the horizon line, and the hints of objects the straining eye could scarcely decipher, tried to the utmost his artist skill and sharpest tool. In one of his

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Thausing (p. 269, German edition) calls this "a genuine Venetian night effect," and, as the date of the picture is 1506, considers that it shows the influence of Giorgione, who was painting, at the time of Dürer's Italian journey, upon the Fondaco at Venice.

<sup>2</sup> In the Museum at Basle there is a drawing by Dürer in Indian ink of a *Crucifixion*, where a fine mass of cloud is seen grandly lifting over a distant horizon of sea, with a mountainous shore.

<sup>3</sup> See the wonderful piled-up crags and towers, the trees, and winding paths, climbing upward to the ancient gateway, in the plate of *St. Hubert*. Again, in the *Knight and Death* a similar betowered town stands aloft in the distance. In the woodcut of *Christ taking leave of His Mother*, bits of old Nuremberg are built up into a lofty walled city.

often repeated views of Nuremberg he has added such a sea-line, with hills sunk low beyond, and a single vessel riding at anchor off a very distant town. None but a Rembrandt or a Bewick could suggest as much and with such fulness of feeling upon an inch of paper. But the familiar plate of the *Melancholy* offers the readiest example of this sea-coast line, and observe therein how under the dark sky the sea shimmers with unearthly light, and a cold white gleam rests upon the hills and small water-side town, such perhaps as he might pass on the Adriatic shore on his way to Venice, if he went, as some have supposed, by Laibach. The rainbow arch suggests that they were illuminated by a flitting storm-light, and well may *Melancolia* be borne above upon a mystic scroll. Not less indicative of a melancholic outlook upon nature is Dürer's fondness for bare boughs, splintered trunks, and the root-tendrils that like death-fingers have lost their hold upon the soil. A pollard tree catches his eye, and he sees in it, not the trim creature of cultivation that the Fleming painted, but an object that has suffered forlorn mutilation. In the minute delineation of all the knots, bark-rings, and amputations of timber, his perfect draughtsmanship no doubt found delight, but the symbol of stern life, and life despoiled in conflict, was surely ever present with him.

That for the purposes of his art Dürer closely studied the detail of landscape, we have ample evidence in his wonderful drawings, which have also the interest in many cases belonging to actual and recognisable scenes. Nuremberg and its neighbourhood supplied, of course, many of these. A view taken from the west side—"a masterpiece of aerial perspective"—is now at Bremen.<sup>1</sup> At Paris is a water-colour drawing of infinite delicacy of the *Weydenmull*, as Dürer writes it. Another gives us, according to the same orthography, the *Trotzechmull*, a drawing in brown tones, rapidly executed with a full brush, representing a flat Franconian valley, precipices rising on the right, and a village below among trees (Posonyi-Hallot Collection). Still more interesting are two drawings in the British Museum. One is the *Weiherhaws*,<sup>2</sup> a singular erection supposed by some to have been a "weinhaus" frequented by the Nurembergers, but which Dr. Thausing explains was a small country-house surrounded by water for the sake of its fish, but in time of war occupied by mercenaries as a post of defence. Dürer some day sat down to portray with accurate eye and faithful hand the reedy, sandy, bush-entangled

<sup>1</sup> Thausing, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 95.

banks of the solitary tarn, full of mysterious reflections, and among them those of the tall old *Weiherhaus*, wavering in the weedy water, evidently more interesting to him than the building itself, and indicative in its way not only of his love for patient study but of his meditative melancholic temperament. The same tendency is revealed in the other subject, a study of pine trunks upon a shallow lake shore. They stand in the warm evening glow breaking from the horizon, some in scattered loneliness, others thickly grouped and purple-shadowed in their depths, while a rack of dark clouds above mingles with their tops. Here, again, no other hand could have rendered with such loving care the haunt of rat and water-fowl along the tufted shores. These and several other drawings dispersed in different collections are records of industrious and loving labour amidst home scenes,—of afternoon or evening strolls outside the towered walls of Nuremberg.

Certain sketches of evidently foreign places possess a different attraction. Among them may be recognised Innsbruck, with reflections of its buildings in the river Inn (Albertina), and a view of Trent. (Malcolm Collection.) In the Louvre is a drawing which we may suppose was made somewhere on the Italian side of the Brenner route, as it is signed by Dürer *Fenedier Klawzen* (Venediger Klausen). It represents a steep hill crowned with a strong castle, from which towers and walls stretch into the valley below. On the right is a small town, its southern character being vouched for by a crowd of olive trees round the foot of the mountain. Perhaps upon the same route is a mountain fortress in a drawing with the inscription *Ein Welsch Schloss*, the mountain touched in very slightly (Hausmann Collection), and another hill-fort in a drawing at Bremen without inscription more powerfully coloured than the last; the castle here is surrounded by hills, forests and water. Yet again there is a *Bergschloss* in the Louvre, a drawing upon parchment. Dürer's fondness for portraying with local truth these grim strongholds amidst striking scenery is remarkable, and coincides with other indications of a peculiar cast of thought. It is the austere side of life and nature by which he is attracted.<sup>1</sup>

These foreign studies, of which several belong to Swabia and Alsace, have a biographical interest. The latter series was executed apparently during a tour made in the year 1515. The earlier and southern subjects have raised a curious question, upon which two

<sup>1</sup> See Thausing's *Dürer*, German edition, chap. v., for an account of these drawings.



such eminent authorities as Thausing and Ephrussi take opposite sides, the former holding that they were studies made with the leisurely care and pains of a student, and as such imply a first journey to Venice during the four years of youthful wandering; the latter that only one Venetian journey took place, that of 1506, but that an excursion from Venice into the mountains gave him the opportunity of delineating mountain scenery. The argument, upon which we need not enter, depends in some degree upon the style of the drawings, Dr. Thausing pointing out that the most highly finished and carefully worked in body-colour, as most of those in question are, would naturally belong to Dürer's earliest period; while those in powerful effective monotonous, the pen-drawings washed with Indian ink, or lastly, those executed in pen or pencil only, would come from a master-hand quick to record fleeting effects or prominent features. This development of power in Dürer's landscape-studies is marked, but it led to the sacrifice of some rare beauties. Dr. Thausing speaks of a study of trees (in the Hausmann Collection) as "so rich in the gradations, and in delicate green tones, that it might have been a study for effects of light only; and showing so much truth of observation freshly and boldly put upon the paper, that one quite forgets the centuries that have passed since it was done." This distinctive quality of greatness is very noticeable in a marvellous drawing at the British Museum, a study of rock detail. It shows in perfection what so few preceding painters, Flemish or Italian, had understood, how the minutest exactitude in individual form can be reconciled with the truth of the whole. That face of crag, partly quarried, partly worn and crumbling, and sheltering in its hollows a rich vegetation, requires a lens to do justice to its microscopic beauty and variety. Yet the innumerable items are fused into a blended richness of form and tint, that is far more truly realistic than the most laborious literalist could ever attain. It is real in the highest sense, because its details are such as result only from the age-long operations of nature, and express the tears as well as smiles that ever accompany her working. It is singular that this true specimen of "high art" bears date 1506, only two years later than that of the hard "literalist" picture in the Uffizi; but then in 1506 Dürer had visited Italy, and learned the mysteries of generalisation.

The landscape of Dürer's woodcuts has not the charm of delicacy but of vigorous generalisation of form. The firm hand tells every-



thing needful for the understanding of hill, wood and plain, or of the old steep-roofed town that has ruled the simple rural scene for generations, but nothing more. What, with all its rude force and simplicity of drawing, can be more full of alpine character than the landscape (Fig. 96) from the *Visitation of the Virgin*, where the

FIG. 96.—LANDSCAPE FROM VISITATION OF THE VIRGIN: DÜRER.

castle is perched on a jutting rock, the upland breaks into crag, and woods wander upwards towards bare or snow-covered mountains?<sup>1</sup> Nor must we omit to notice here his liking for a dark sky; it gives

<sup>1</sup> When selecting this landscape for illustration I forgot that Mr. Ruskin had done the same (*Modern Painters*, iv. 222). He speaks of "the crest in the middle distance" as exceedingly fine in its expression of mountain force." It is a curious coincidence that Marc Antonio, of whose piracies Durer bitterly complained, found it convenient to copy this landscape for one of his plates. I have been obliged to reduce its size.

peculiar impressiveness to his landscape, and completely reverses the effect of which the early Flemings were so fond, that of a sky which was all ethereal brightness.

Putting all these things together we get something of what Dürer thought of scenery. It is not quite what we should expect after Mr. Ruskin's description of "the orderly and narrow succession of domestic joy and peace in a small German community"; of "the well-regulated community of merchants of small ware," amidst which he says Dürer's life was passed. Nor, surely, is it quite true that the pastoral Franconian country, "with its steep though not lofty rocks, its scattered pines, and its fortresses and chapels, are the motive of all his wilder landscapes."<sup>1</sup> No; Dürer's landscape tells more than this. For one thing, we must recollect that he was of Hungarian descent, his features show it, and his peculiar melancholy belongs also to this hereditary strain. Nor is it to be supposed that the Teutonic questioning and somewhat dreamy spirit was quite absent among the shops of Nuremberg; while it is certain that when, as in Dürer's time, the Reformation flamed abroad, the minds of Nurembergers were stirred with thoughts that went far beyond the "narrow succession of domestic joy and peace." At any rate, Dürer, who was not a man of the "small-ware" sort, stands forth one of the elect exponents of the national mind.

We have already suggested a resemblance to Da Vinci; we find confirmation of it in the restless prying into nature's secrets common to both. How certainly would Leonardo, like Dürer, have journeyed eagerly in search of the stranded whale, the monster from the unknown deep, that was heard of rotting on the shore of Zealand! But the curiosity of the German went deeper than that of the Italian, whose fancy roved among objects of sense more for the sake of oddity and endless variety than for anything else. Dürer questioned the spirit of man and the problems of his destiny, and in that respect reminds us of another and a greater Italian than Da Vinci, the severe and melancholy Dante. Both were profoundly religious. Three times in his later years Dürer issued a series of the Passion; more and more his mind fastened upon that central sorrow as being for the human soul the crisis and the key of life, and in its pictorial exposition he essayed to become one of the preachers of his day. The theme no less suited his religious convictions than his questioning spirit and his melancholic temperament. If landscape had hitherto

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Painters*, v. 239.

afforded a large and sympathetic field for these tendencies of his nature, he now, under a more powerful influence, desired rather to express his brooding thought in imaging the Divine countenance marred with grief, and the surrounding drama of human passion; landscape henceforth took less possession of his canvases, though to the last with a clear pen or pencil stroke, as in his sketch of the quays of Antwerp (dated by himself 1520), he put on paper the features of any new scene.

Dürer must indeed ever remain the great inaugurator of landscape study, one of the earliest exponents of its powers. Like Da Vinci, he left on record in manuscript the results of his landscape observations; the book is lost, but his best record remains in his works, which even in his own day attracted so much attention that Italian painters possessed themselves of his engravings and borrowed his landscape for their own pictures. Lomazzo, a Milanese painter of some note in landscape, writing about fifty years after Dürer's death, says, "Dürer alone discovered more than all the other masters put together." Certainly his treatment of landscape goes far to justify the large assertion.

Dürer stirred up much art activity in the south German land; all artists of the day were influenced by his genius, and several were more or less directly associated with him.

Among these HANS KULMBACH (died before 1522), an apprentice of Dürer's, but who had first studied under a Venetian (a Jacopo de Barbaris, who had come that way), deserves passing mention for his landscape. It tends to pale blue, and his peaked mountains on the horizon show that he did not confine himself to Nuremberg scenery. An *Adoration of the Three Kings*,<sup>1</sup> however, belonging to the Lippmann Collection at Vienna, is described as possessing a hilly and wooded landscape which seems of a different character, and to display "a soft harmony of the general tone," to which his Venetian master may have helped him.

HANS L. SCHÄUFELEIN (died 1549) of Nordlingen, where his chief works are to be found, belonged also to the studio of Dürer; though not much younger than the master, he was probably less a student than an assistant, nor did he stay with him long. Lord Lindsay bestows high praise upon Schäufolein, whose pictures he considers

<sup>1</sup> Engraved in *Early Teutonic, Italian, and French Masters*, p. 138.

“full of feeling and character.” This is not the general opinion, and he would scarcely have found a place in our pages but for what is further said in *Christian Art* of an immense landscape then in the Litta Palace at Milan. The subject is the whole history of the Trojan War, and of it Lord Lindsay says: “The colouring, the exquisite finish, and the care withal displayed in the execution of this picture, render it one of the most extraordinary relics of the old German School, and it possesses a distinct interest as a specimen of a style of historical composition peculiarly affected by the class of artists I am now treating of, and which I am inclined to think was first brought into fashion by Schäufelein,—a style in which the figures are subordinated to the landscape in a similar manner to what we have noticed in the School of Van Eyck, although in these the flood of diminutive life overflows the foreground as well as remoter regions; on the other hand, the multitude of figures, the vigour and concentration of their purpose, make up for the deficiency of more prominent and central groups, and hence they still preserve their character of historical paintings, and are distinguishable by this subtle but essential difference from the landscapes similar to them in other respects,—of Patenier, De Bles, and other Flemings” (v. iii. 382).

The Litta Collection is dispersed, and the whereabouts of this picture is not known to the writer. In the Moritz Capella at Nuremberg is a *Judith and Holofernes*, one of his multitudinous subjects, in which the whole history of the heroine is given, the mountains and towns all jumbled together; in a *St. Jerome* the wilderness is a wooded scene, the trees too much like cabbages, but the whole good in tone, which quality, one should say, was his principal excellence. In the Cassel Gallery is a *Christ and the Magdalen*, in which “the background is filled by a landscape stretching away in the distance, with rocks, hills, and clumps of trees,”<sup>1</sup> all executed with loving finish, but without any touch of genius. Schäufelein may be interesting as practising a peculiar and not exalted style of art, but surely for little else!

A greater man was HANS BURGKMAIR (1473-1531), who, a contemporary of Dürer's, supports the fame of Augsburg. This imperial city seems to have had special relations with Venice. Its famous citizens, the Fuggers, owned a palace there; we do not hear of

<sup>1</sup> *Early Teutonic Masters*, etc., in which an engraving of this picture is given.

Nurembergers doing so, though no doubt they were largely interested in the Fondaco de' Tedeschi, presently to become famous from its early patronage of Giorgione and Titian, who, let us note, was born but four years later than the Augsburg painter. And it is Venetian influence that may be distinctly traced in Burgkmair when, in his terrible design (a drawing) of *Death the Destroyer*, he gives a Venetian background of palaces, with a canal, a bridge, and a gondola. This association is the more interesting from the fact that Burgkmair gave much attention to landscape. Kugler speaks of him as being, "with Altdorfer, the first in Germany to work the detail of his landscape backgrounds in accordance with nature," and certainly study of nature may be recognised in some admirable pen and ink drawings at Munich; in these, fir trees are excellently indicated, a pine wood has evidently been sketched on the

FIG. 97.—FROM THE RAISING OF DRUSIANA: BURGMAIR, AUGSBURG.

spot, and mountains are carefully outlined. Dürer, as we have seen, studied nature, and was especially attentive to the minutest detail, so that whatever there may be of conscientious landscape work in Burgkmair, he cannot take the place of Dürer, nor does he exhibit the fine poetic feeling of Dürer. Nevertheless he is one of the first masters who affected twilight—led thereto perhaps by his feeling for colour. A small oil picture by Burgkmair, at the St. Moritz Capella, Nuremberg, the *Virgin and Child* (No. 155) sitting under a tree, has an Italian deep-toned twilight, an effect which he also repeats in another subject there. In the first named the distance is very beautifully touched, minute, yet not too defined; while a *St. Christopher* (61) shows in its soft muzzy look a remarkably modern treatment of landscape.

It is at Augsburg, however, that we find more of Burgkmair than anywhere else. In two separate subjects of the *Crucifixion*

distant snow-mountains are introduced, not with the gay glitter of the Flemings, but, like Dürer's cold solemn masses, rising up here and there behind dark hills. In the *Agony in the Garden* there is also a snow-covered hill, illuminated while all else is dark; and this evidence of winter, here appropriately introduced, is repeated in the *Raising of Drusiana* (Fig. 97) with very striking effect; yet there is this singular incongruity, that the trees, painted with a curious, metallic, flakey sort of foliage, are in full rich-coloured leaf! In all these pictures the extent of landscape justifies the special association of Burgkmair's name with this branch of art, to which he certainly brought painstaking delineation, deep tones of colour, and a vein, though a limited one, of poetic feeling.

GEORGE PENCZ, SEBALD BEHAM, and his brother BARTEL BEHAM, all Nurembergers, and about the same age, since they obtained rights of citizenship nearly together (something before 1524), were also of the Dürer school of draughtsmanship. The three were no less associated in art than in free thinking of a sort that shocked Catholic and Protestant alike, and were early expelled from Nuremberg, though Pencz and Sebald returned, at least for a time. They are more celebrated for their copperplate engravings than for paintings; but Pencz had a reputation as a colourist, especially in portraits, and this quality is conspicuous in a small picture at the Rotterdam Museum,—*A Scholar in his Study reading*. Through a window or door there is a perfect little landscape of its kind, of no pretension, but full of tone, rich in colour, and delicate in touch. Such a picture raises more than doubt respecting a *Crucifixion* at the Belvedere, Vienna, which, in its huddle of white mountains and crowd of buildings, is not landscape.

Sebald Beham requires notice only on account of his engraved illustrations of rustic merry-makings, but he does not care to dwell upon the landscape side of them.

BARTEL BEHAM (1502-1540), however, was a painter and a colourist. We must refer the reader to Dr. Woltmann for an account of the landscape in an *Adoration of the Kings* by him, the centre-piece of which is at Messkirch in Bavaria. He speaks of the "glittering splendour of the colouring . . . in the surrounding landscape, with the ruined arches, its soft, green, and Swiss-like

mountains." The wings are at Donaueschingen, and in these also "the beauty of the landscape and scenery is conspicuous."

These men, pupils as they probably were of Dürer, but far inferior to him in power and feeling, accepted, as he did not, the Renaissance influence from Italy, with the result of greater harmony and richer tone, in the few landscape accessories that remain to us from their hands.

HANS BALDUNG (1476 ?–1545), or "GRIEN" as they called him, probably from his fondness for the green clothes in which he is seen portrayed at Freiburg in Breisgau, was a Swabian painter, who lived chiefly at Strasburg or at Freiburg. He was strongly influenced by Dürer, who pleasantly wrote of "Green John's things," and there must have been affectionate relations between the two, for Baldung accompanied Dürer on a Rhineland journey in 1515, and preserved a lock of the great master's hair, now in the possession of the Vienna Academy.<sup>1</sup> Baldung is fond of effects of light, and in his great altar-piece at Freiburg, a *Nativity* is illuminated at once by moonlight, and by the radiance surrounding the Holy Child. At Colmar is a *Temptation of St. Anthony*, with a landscape, "very beautiful";<sup>2</sup> and at Prague, in a *Martyrdom of St. Dorothea*, is "a masterly winter landscape."<sup>3</sup> Let the reader, having opportunity, examine for himself. At Berlin is a *Crucifixion* (603), in which the writer can testify to extremely fine and broadly painted mountains partly covered with snow, the nearer slopes dark with pine forest, the trees in front well thrown in, and a large dignity about the whole which speaks of power. But in colour it is all one blue tint, which seems to show what he lacked, for the same defect is still more apparent at Frankfort, if the picture be Grien's, where to a hard and ugly *Baptism* is attached a strange wild scene of lake and mountain, of a similar pale cold blue.

NICHOLAS MANUEL of Berne (1484-1531) was a contemporary of Dürer, and like him, though some five years later, visited Venice; but it was not Bellini, though he was still living, nor Giorgione, who died in that year 1511, from whom Manuel carried away the most vivid impressions; rather it was the rising glory of Titian that attracted him, and whose landscape especially influenced his. It is remarkable how much all these masters concern themselves with

<sup>1</sup> Woltmann, *Early Teutonic Masters*, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Kugler.

<sup>3</sup> Woltmann.



landscape. Kugler speaks of the "richness and frequent beauty" of Manuel's "landscape backgrounds," and instances two pictures in tempera at the Basle Museum—*Pyramus and Thisbe*, and a *Virgin and Child with a St. Anna and other Saints*. We can speak only of the former, in which dark-blue mountains appear with a twilight sky behind them—thus far Titianesque; a realistic pine trunk divides the picture; fir branches are well indicated; and a crag rises on the left, crowned with towers and buildings. In the figures there is much ugliness, in the scenery much realism, and no separation of distances; but there is warm colour, picturesqueness, and, more than that, some poetry of conception.

Dr. Von Eye, in his *Life of Dürer*, remarks that "though he (Dürer) did not raise landscape to the position of a special department in art, he gave to it in almost all his pictures so much importance, and executed it with such richness of fancy, and inventive power, that the idea of its independent treatment lay very near, and we find the earliest landscape painters among his pupils." Remembering the earlier and extraordinary development of landscape in the Flemish school, it is evident that such a statement can only refer to Germany; but neither with one striking exception is it specially applicable, we think, to the pupils or immediate followers of Dürer. That exception is Albrecht Altdorfer, supposed to have studied under Dürer, though the only known link between them is an inscription upon a drawing, purporting that it was given to Altdorfer by Dürer in 1509, when the former was nearly thirty years of age; unfortunately the drawing cannot now be found.

ALBRECHT ALTDORFER (1480 ?–1538) was probably the son of an Ulrich Altdorfer of Amberg, in Bavaria, but who was originally from Ratisbon, where the son early established himself, taking up his citizenship in 1505. Whether or no he had previously studied at Nuremberg, the genius and renown of the great man there, must in no small degree have influenced the younger man in such near neighbourhood as Ratisbon. Altdorfer, however, was not exclusively a painter. At Ratisbon he became an altogether distinguished citizen, living in a house "with a tower," purchased in 1513, and still standing in the Oberen Bach Gasse. He bought a second house with a garden in 1518. He was a member first of the outer, and then of the inner Council; and was town architect ("Paumeister"), in which



capacity he was called upon to fortify Ratisbon during the siege of Vienna by the Turks in 1529-30. After the death of his wife in 1532, and after parting with the house "with a garden," he purchased another outside the city, which he used only in summer, and where it is supposed he studied his landscape effects.<sup>1</sup> At this house, having occupied it for six years, he died, after apparently a short illness. He was buried where his wife lay, in the Augustinian Church, and, having embraced the doctrines of the Reformation, he "neither desired nor permitted" masses to be said for his soul, but, instead, bequeathed for the benefit of the most necessitous in the poorhouse his silver goblet, "that one with the little foreign head," which had been his wedding gift to his wife. He appears to have been an estimable, useful, and pious man, though one regrets to find that as member of the Council he signed a decree for the expulsion of the Jews, whose synagogue had been destroyed by the populace, regarding it as "a just judgment of God." From their burial-ground also he took a quantity of the gravestones for the pavement of his house.<sup>2</sup> In this he, no doubt, only acted like his neighbours; nevertheless he had drawn and engraved views of the synagogue, from the inside as well as the outside, before its destruction.

As Altdorfer is less known than many painters of his time, and is, not without reason, styled by Kugler "the creator of landscape-painting in Germany," we may be permitted these few details of his life, and a rather full notice of his works.

His most famous picture, though not properly a landscape, is characteristic of his style. It represents the *Battle of Arbela*, and is one of those elaborate pieces with thousands of small figures, so popular at the time. It is the multitudinous host in conflict that gives the picture its fame, and so captivated Napoleon that it was carried off to Paris and hung in his bath-room at St. Cloud. Among other restored plunder it got back to Munich, where it may be seen in the Pinacothek. But, however marvellous for crowded action, the scenery of the picture is worthy of attention for its prodigality of imaginative power. It is not only that, in Lord Lindsay's words, "the eye loses itself in a wilderness of landscape—valleys, plains, mountains, capes, and promontories, azure in the

<sup>1</sup> As there is no landscape to speak of about Ratisbon, atmospheric effects must be intended.

<sup>2</sup> I happen to know of an English village in which the stones of an ancient church-yard were regularly applied to a similar use.

distance, with the sea beyond them, and islands beyond that again still extending and expanding, as if we gazed with Satan from the top of Niphates"; not only this, for we have had this in others, but there is added a Turner-esque romantic grandeur in the wild outrageous sky, that repeats the conflict going on below; in the sun that sets in blood over the illimitable sea of mountains and far-stretching lakes; in the ruined building at the mountain-foot that catches the last red gleams. Dürer had recognised something of the melancholy moods of nature, but here surely is one who apprehended her capability for dramatic, sensational effect, and we may regard his work as marking a further development of landscape-art. There is, however, a great lack of unity in the composition. All sorts of landscape effects are huddled together, for want of the master-hand which gathers into one large consenting sweep all the elements of a scene; this was pre-eminently the gift of Turner, and the great Italians contemporary with Altdorfer possessed it in large measure.

But it is not fair to estimate Altdorfer by so complicated and difficult a subject. Let us take a small picture in the Moritz Capella at Nuremberg, representing the dead body of St. Quirinus, rescued from the water by pious women for burial. Who this Quirinus was is a rather interesting question, to which we shall have occasion to return; at present we need only notice that Altdorfer has treated the recovery of the body with dramatic instinct. The sun of that day of violence is setting blood-red amongst dark masses of cloud, dark mountains rise against the dark sky, and one gloomy tower completes the suggestion of an evil deed. A man and two women—forlorn but faithful converts—perform, under shelter of the wooded banks of the river, their pious act. The conception is fine, yet there is a harshness and incongruity of treatment, marking imperfect power of execution, as, for instance, in the red clouds that coagulate in an impossible way about the disc of the sun. (Fig. 98.)

There are two other pictures in the same collection, showing in lesser degree the same qualities. In a subject described as *The Death of St. Stephen*, but which we believe to be the same Quirinus going to execution, since he is being led across a bridge, there is again a strange, wild, cloud-wreathed sun, with a weird effect of light upon the buildings of a town, and upon a hillside against a dark sky. The whole is very rich in colour, but shows a feebleness of touch, especially in the clouds, characteristic of this painter, whose imaginative gifts may not have been supported by severe and effective

training. The other picture, a *Crucifixion*, dated 1506, and consequently an early work, has the same indistinct though picturesque touch, but there is a misty gloom, a richness of colour, and a minute delicacy in the foliage, which indicate the bent of his genius.

Kugler reports a fine landscape in the Landauer Brüderhaus at Nuremberg. That collection is now dispersed, and it is difficult to trace the picture referred to, though a small *Holy Family*, now in

FIG. 98.—RECOVERY OF THE BODY OF ST. QUIRINUS: ALTDORFER.

the German Museum there, is said to have come from the Brüderhaus. It does not fairly represent Altdorfer. The landscape is cold and hard, with most metallic near greens and a white sky; but an element of that romantic style he favoured is found in an "Udolpho-like" castle hanging upon the side of a pine-covered crag, and in the towering mountain-form behind it. Let us remark here that Altdorfer is not fantastic in the forms of his mountains in the sense that Patenier is; they are built up from solid, wide-spreading bases, in the true grand manner of mountains.

Altdorfer is indeed often fanciful enough in buildings, but we must remember that he was an architect, and might like sometimes

to indulge his fancy uncontrolled by estimates or other prosaic conditions. At Munich, in a *Susanna and the Elders*, a gorgeous palace, like a startling piece of confectionery, and a blue sky furiously flecked (with the purpose apparently of achieving sparkle and depth), must fairly be put out of sight before certain genuine landscape excellences disclose themselves in the distance. There is a row of pollard willows along the green bank of a canal, painted with excellent perspective, Dutch delicacy and brilliance; while among charming trees in the foreground is a branch, relieved against a light cloud, given with all the accuracy of a study from nature. A *Deposition* again, also in the Pinacothek, shows a lovely distance; a stream, fringed with graceful trees, wanders through a tree-besprinkled meadow, which is backed by a blue range of mountains. But for these indications of a feeling for simple landscape beauty as well as for sensational effects, it would be difficult to understand how Altdorfer could have painted a small upright (Cabinet Collection, Pinacothek) called *St. George and the Dragon*. The figures are entirely subordinate to a forest scene, in which the trees are painted with great care and finish, and reveal one delightful peep of distant woodland, ridge after ridge, with a solitary mountain in soft repose upon the twilight horizon. The whole of this is surprisingly modern in feeling. A companion picture, a mountain landscape with birches and fir trees, is no less so, but this is attributed to a close imitator of Altdorfer's, Hirschvogel.<sup>1</sup> There is also in the Pinacothek (Cabinets 160) *A Virgin in Glory*, where, grandly bespread below, is a dark blue stretch of mountain-land, and, what is more curious, at the back a study of a setting sun with the same cloud-enshrouding effects as in the *Quirinus* and the *Battle of Arbela*,—another example of the peculiar Altdorfer sentiment.

We have mentioned a doubtful Altdorfer, and there are, in fact, but a small number of pictures which can be assigned with any confidence to him, the majority of his works having strangely disappeared, and particularly those in his own city of Ratisbon, where, of twenty-five oil pictures existing as late as 1819, not one, it is said, now remains. The Ratisbon Historical Society claims, indeed, to have two or three in its possession, but they are all disputed. The largest of them, a triptych, "horribly restored," called by some a *Nativity*, but really an epitome of Reformed

<sup>1</sup> See Meyer's *Künstler-Lexikon*, article "Altdorfer," where it is suggested that this is the picture, formerly at the Brüderhaus in Nuremberg, so highly praised by Kugler.

Church doctrine, is, both by Dr. J. Meyer in his *Lexikon* and by Adolf Rosenberg (in the "Dohme Series"), attributed to another follower of Altdorfer, some ten years younger than himself, who also lived at Ratisbon—Michael Ostendorfer. He certainly imitated Altdorfer's style in landscape, and could produce very good work too, as a portrait in the Society's rooms, dated 1555, and showing a richly-toned landscape on either side, proves.

A picture, entitled *David and Bathsheba*, in the collection, according to an inscription at the back, was given to the "Senate and people of Ratisbon" by George Abraham Peychel in 1651, and is described as "Tabulam hanc Alberti Altdorfferi Excellentissimi Pictoris Ratisbonensis." The king, or rather the emperor, Charles V., is crossing a bridge over a brook from under an old tower, the while a very decent lady, dressed up to the eyes, washes her peeping feet in the shallow stream below. The whole is really a landscape. The brook comes winding down from among wooded hills, which are of a deep brownish-green colour, after the hard manner of Dürer. There is a low pink light in the sky, which is dark above with clouds. The near trees are heavily painted with defined leafage, and are draped with hanging hairy moss<sup>1</sup> in a manner peculiar to Altdorfer, whose fancy seems to have been much taken with this feature in pine forests. He introduces it in his earliest known picture, the *Crucifixion* at Nuremberg, and it is hardly ever absent. We may take it as proof of an independent study of nature, but also of a rather morbid taste for the wild and grotesque.<sup>2</sup>

It is at Berlin, after Munich, that we find the best specimens of Altdorfer's landscapes; they are all of small size, and of exquisite finish. The gem of the collection is *The Flight into Egypt*, belonging to his earlier time (the date 1540 cannot be right); there is no sensational effect, but there is much sweetness and grace,—in the pleasant lake shore, receding with excellent gradation and aerial perspective towards the tossing blue mountains of the misty distance, in the soft flickering summer clouds that float above, and in the sunny glow upon the nearer crags, where quaintly-gabled houses, old towers, and gateways are perched up and down. A ruined chateau in front is most dapper in its ruin, for the old bricks

<sup>1</sup> *Cornicularia jubata*?

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Julius Meyer attributes this picture to Ostendorfer, who, like other imitators, always introduced the hanging moss.

and mortar are painted with infinite care to *imitate* ruin. Another picture, similar in its delicate painting, is the *Pride and Poverty*, of droll sarcastic meaning, for, upon the long train of a princely pair ascending the steps of a splendid palace, squat a couple of loathly beggars. Upon this conceit Altdorfer has lavished abundance of finish, on figures and landscape alike. The latter offers a curious anticipation of Brueghel in the heaps of objects—the towns, mountains, etc.—in the rich harmonies of browns and greens in the foreground, and in the miniature workmanship. But the sky of soft clouds is not disfigured by the intense disagreeable blue of Brueghel. In two small uprights, *St. Francis* and *St. Jerome*, we have apparently early works, as the date is 1507. In the first appears a fine saffron glow behind dark hills, and in the second, the vista of a narrow lake among woods, under a pathetic watery light. In both, the trees are profusely fringed with hairy moss, and both are full of poetic feeling.

The Augsburg Museum possesses an altar-piece which is reckoned a *chef d'œuvre* of the master, but it is of larger proportions than he could well manage, and has no landscape, in which, to our mind, his genius was chiefly shown. In one particular we are reminded of his originality; the darkness is represented by a curious hanging cloud, with light-blue sky below; nor is it altogether beside our purpose to notice the highly dramatic action introduced, especially that of a child, who, directed by its father, looks up intently at the cross. Much more interesting, were it Altdorfer's, would be a *Nativity* at Lübeck, greatly admired by Lord Lindsay, who speaks of "the streak of sunset that still lights up the fading landscape." The writer, however, has the authority of Dr. Julius Meyer for saying that this work is by Mostaert, and that another, a *Trinity*, in the same place, also attributed to Altdorfer by Lord Lindsay, is by Van Orley. Of another picture, spoken of by Dr. Adolf Rosenberg as "the finest of Altdorfer's youthful essays"—a *Nativity*, now in the Art Hall at Bremen—the writer has no other information; but there is something very like Altdorfer in the description of "a mighty ruin showing the nightly firmament through its decaying roof," and of a couple of shepherds advancing through the mouldering gateway to worship the new-born Saviour, "while, quite in the background, the sun is already tinging the russet clouds that enclose the horizon."

At Vienna the Belvedere collection (see the old catalogue) once possessed a picture by Altdorfer, of which the subject was

a wild rocky landscape, with a tall fir tree rising in the midst, and in the distance a lake with a town and castle on its banks. But this, like so many others, has disappeared.

According to Dr. Meyer in his *Lexikon*, but one "Altdorfer" is

FIG. 99.—MOONLIGHT AMONG TREES: ALTDORFER.

to be found in Britain, and that is the *St. Hubert* in the M'Clellan collection, Glasgow. But this picture does not give any idea of Altdorfer's poetical fancy, possibly because he here followed the fancy of a patron. There is, indeed, a picturesque ruined castle on a height, but it may have come there only as the former stronghold of the family owning a castellated mansion below; the whole



looks like an actual scene under common daylight. The stiff bronzed foliage of the foreground, the feeble minuteness of many parts, with the general want of unity, seem to indicate an early work, and the fact that a large old fir-tree occupies the middle of the picture suggests that it may possibly be the missing landscape of the Belvedere.

In one very unexpected quarter, however, may be found, as the writer believes, two of Altdorfer's pictures well worthy of attention. At Siena, in the Scuola Tedesca of the Academy, they occupy a corner among undistinguished names. In one of them the moon breaks through a scud of clouds behind the bare branches, drooping tendrils, and hanging mosses of a tree. The subject is the meeting of an anonymous saint, habited as a pilgrim, with two other persons. The Altdorferian character of the scene is manifest. (Fig. 99.) The other picture is of special interest, since it appears to be the complement of the *Quirinus* picture at Nuremberg—that in which, at sunset, the dead body of the saint is recovered from the water. Here, on the contrary, is the martyrdom itself, depicted with rare tragic power, and not by evening but by morning light. A wooden bridge stretches high across the picture, crowded with men, gesticulating, shouting, pushing to see. Amidst them kneels the victim on the timbered edge; the mill-stone has been adjusted to his neck, a man stands ready to bandage his eyes, others urgently remonstrate, pointing to the stream below; dignified citizens look gravely on; the saint, unmindful of the clamour, surveys with a curious, fixed, half-smiling gaze the dark water into which he will soon be plunged! Beneath the bridge the eye follows the wide stream upwards, as it comes winding from among purple hills, whose summits are bright with dawn. The walls of an old castle on a promontory rise distinct against the low clear light, and the houses of a town descend in silent shades to the water's edge. The contrast between the stillness of advancing day, the calm of the solitary hills, and the murderous uproar upon the bridge, is finely suggested. Nor can we omit to notice that slimy weeds dripping from the timbers of the bridge are exactly in the style of Altdorfer. (Fig. 100.)

If Altdorfer were ever in Italy, here is the proof of its influence upon him. The colouring of the group is of Venetian richness, resembling in this respect, however, that of the *Crucifixion* at Augsburg; and there is more firmness of drawing, more tone, both in landscape and figures, than we generally find. But it has the



Altdorfer monogram, and, comparing it with the one attributed to him at Nuremberg, the differences, no less than the similarities, seem to authenticate both. The Nuremberg picture completes the story of which the earlier part is told at Siena, and of which a

FIG. 100.—MARTYRDOM OF ST. QUIRINUS: ALTDORFER.

still earlier portion seems to be recorded in the passage to execution across a *bridge* of the so-called *St. Stephen* at the Moritz Capella.

But what particular interest had Altdorfer in this story? There are two martyrs bearing the name of Quirinus. One was a soldier under Aurelian, who perished dragged to death by horses; the other was an aged bishop of Pannonia, tied to a mill-stone and drowned, 309, A.D. in the Save. Manifestly the first was not the Quirinus intended, and the second was an old man, whereas Altdorfer

in all the pictures, and especially in the *Martyrdom*, represents a youthful figure; besides, though Quirinus is one of the eight tutelary saints of Austria, he perished a long way from Ratisbon and the Danubian region. But there is St. Florian, a young tribune of the army, who, in the reign of Diocletian, was thrown from a *bridge* into the Enns, near where it joins the Danube (some accounts say with a mill-stone), "whose body was carried to a certain promontory, where an eagle guarded it till a pious matron, Valeria, came secretly and buried it." The story of this famous saint, the patron of bridges, appears to answer so remarkably to that treated by Altdorfer, even to the pious matron, and his interest in it is so explicable, that we are inclined to substitute Florian for Quirinus in all these pictures.<sup>1</sup>

Altdorfer, like many of his time, when copper-plates and woodcuts had opened so large a field, devoted much of his busy life to those branches of art, applying them with much success to landscape. The graver or the etching-point favoured the minute delicacy of which he was so fond, and he used the latter especially in a series of landscapes of which ten are extant, believed to be the earliest attempts to popularise landscape in this way. They belong, apparently, to the richest period of his art, show the most delicate feeling for nature, and excel especially in the scenery of mountain regions; in one a river comes sweeping from the hills, in another a timber slide stretches down from the forests. In a delicate pen-drawing at the British Museum many of his characteristics appear (Fig. 101), the long pendulous mosses are very marked, and that curious coagulation of cloud about the sun, which we have noticed. The mountains are put in picturesquely, but with that rather feeble indecisive line which distinguishes his work, and is so very unlike Dürer. Altdorfer must always take a prominent place in the history of landscape-art—due, for one thing, to the fact that several of his pictures are more distinctly landscapes than anything else, but chiefly to his singular appreciation of scenic effects in nature—battling cloud, reddening sun, and mournful wandering lights—and for the use he made of these in telling the story of his subjects.

<sup>1</sup> A private letter from Dr. Julius Meyer, the distinguished director of the Berlin Museum, not only kindly furnished the correction about the supposed Altdorfer pictures at Lübeck, but supports the opinion that the three pictures at the Moritz Capella (the two of St. Stephen and the one of Quirinus) may represent three scenes in the life of St. Quirinus, or possibly of St. Florian. Dr. Meyer believes that two pictures at Siena, though not mentioned in the *Lexikon*, are by Altdorfer, but from his description they are not the same as those seen by the writer first in 1878, and again in 1881.

**FIG. 101.—FAC-SIMILE, REDUCED, OF A PEN-DRAWING BY ALTENDORFER.**

But while we speak of Altdorfer as having added scenic effect to landscape, we must not forget one who might have excelled him in this, had circumstances, those strange inexorable controllers of genius, permitted. MATHIAS GRÜNEWALD of Aschaffenburg is little known either in his life or his works. Mainz seems to have been his chief place of residence, where, we are told, he lived a sad and retired life, having married unhappily. Of his birth or death nothing is known, nor whence came his art-education, for, though contemporary with Dürer, there is no word of any association with the Nuremberg school.

The lonely man is alone in his art, of which few specimens now remain, but these so impressed Sandrart, writing in the succeeding century, that he called him "the German Correggio," resembling the great Italian, as well in his separateness from art schools as in his "rare sense of colour, culminating in light, and chiaroscuro effects";<sup>1</sup> yet not at all as regards the influence of the Renaissance, of which Grünewald shows no trace.

To the landscape of a master of chiaroscuro we must needs turn with interest. Would that a picture carried off by the Swedes from Mainz, and lost by shipwreck in the waters of the Baltic, were still on the Cathedral walls! It represented "the martyrdom of a recluse surprised by assassins on the frozen waters of the Rhine."<sup>2</sup> But "a small picture of the Resurrection, a night scene with brilliant light effects, is in the Basle Museum"; and at Colmar is a grand work in which the landscape is described by Dr. Woltmann, giving perhaps less than his due to Altdorfer, as "in scenic effect going far beyond the whole German art of the period." Our notes refer to a *St. Anna* at Munich (No. 761), not mentioned by Woltmann or Kugler, the landscape of which is described in the catalogue as "a carefully-finished forest scene with a castle ruin," and the noticeable effect is that of trees against a cloudy sky. Two portraits are assigned to him in the Belvedere Gallery; one of them (No. 12) shows in the background dark mountains and a dark blue lake, so treated as to be termed "a fine thought"; and the other (No. 8) a richly painted little bit, farm-buildings backed by wood. We will end with a pregnant quotation from Dr. Woltmann: "Uffenbach, his pupil's pupil, was the teacher of Adam Elsheimer, of Frankfort, who later on resided in Rome as a renowned landscape-

<sup>1</sup> Dr. A. Woltmann in the "Dohme Series." To this essay I am chiefly indebted for the account of Grünewald.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

painter, a master of chiaroscuro and the head of a school. Around him were gathered many artists from the Low Countries, amongst whom was Peter Lastmann, teacher of Rembrandt, the great northern master of chiaroscuro in the seventeenth century." Whether a subtle and secret stream of influence descended from Grünewald to Rembrandt may be doubtful, but the concatenation of names is remarkable.

We have already mentioned two imitators of Altdorfer, and before passing on we may name another, MELCHIOR FESELEN, of Ingolstadt, who, whether precisely an imitator or not, was employed to paint part of that series of battle-pieces of which Altdorfer's *Arbela* was one. Two of these are at Munich—*Porsenna's Siege of Rome* and the *Storming of Alesia by Julius Cæsar*. In the last of these, beyond the vast battle of the foreground, lies a calm lake amidst quiet blue hills, carefully studied. The clouds are odd, and the whole with all its merit falls short of the poetic fervour of Altdorfer. Better than these is a small picture at the Moritz Capella, Nuremberg (136), of St. Jerome, formerly ascribed to Altdorfer, in which the mountain distance and the shore of a lake are admirable, the clouds defined far more firmly than was the wont of the Ratisbon master, and the whole deep and rich in tone.

LUCAS CRANACH, originally of Bamberg in Bavaria (1472–1553?), but settling for a long life in Saxony, and a prominent adherent of the Reformation there, demands a word to indicate his position in landscape, though he contributed nothing to its progress; yet, rugged and original as he was, something of this must needs appear in all he touched. So, when his subject is *David in the Wilderness of Ziph* (Moritz Capella), there is something striking in the near crags, with the spearmen clambering amongst them—something striking, too, in the light which lies low under a dark sky. We see in this a dramatic conception. Again, in *Joab and Abner*, at the Belvedere, Vienna, there is an original treatment of trunks of trees rising out of sight, the low light, the white cliffs, and fortress. And if this master sometimes, yet how rarely, shows "a gentle and almost timid grace,"<sup>1</sup> we may find indications of this at Berlin (564), where there is a clear opal distance of lake—probably that of Constance, distant spires, and low hills with dark bush-covered islands in soft

<sup>1</sup> Kugler, i. 189.

shadow. Again, the *Venus and Cupid* displays a very sweet soft vista of distance, but this picture may be only of his school.

Cranach, with his defective taste and want of art-culture, fell frequently into caricature; and this also is reflected in his landscape, as witness the Tarpeian rock in the background of his *Lucretia*.<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 102). The overhanging crag with houses on the top is a triumph of impossibility; while if two subjects at Augsburg—*The Destruction of Pharaoh* and *Sacrifice of Abraham*—be really by him, he could descend to the absurdest depths of sign-board-painting.



FIG. 102.—THE TARPEIAN ROCK: CRANACH.

Augsburg, we have seen, produced in Hans Burgkmair a rival in some sort to the great master at Nuremberg, but Augsburg in later years was to produce a far greater rival in HANS HOLBEIN (1498-1543), who, indeed, stands side by side with Dürer in German art of the sixteenth century.

But let us first speak of the older HANS, the father. (Year of birth unknown, but dying in 1524.) In his works has been traced a distinct connection with Flemish art, from their showing the influence of Van der Weyden, amongst other things, in "the clear transparence of their tones." This quality is very evident in the sky and mountains of the *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian* at Munich, now attributed to the elder, and not to the younger Hans, respecting which Dr. Woltmann makes the very interesting assertion that "they are the Alps as they may be seen in clear weather from the walls of Augsburg"—a statement the writer is unable to verify. To his remembrance, however, they are not "snow-mountains," as Dr. Woltmann describes them, but rather the blue-gray shapes of the Bavarian hills, seen across the plain. The trunk of a tree in the foreground is more like the trunk of an elephant than anything else, and might have been taken from an early engraving rather than from nature. This picture is, however, far better in its landscape than others attributed to old Hans, as, for instance, two that are at Augsburg. In one of these St. Paul is shipwrecked by night

<sup>1</sup> Belonging to Mr. Leyland, and exhibited at Burlington House, 1882.

in a waveless pool; in the other, a *Transfiguration*, under an intensely purple sky, dark purple mountains rise like obelisks, and the "holy mount" itself is but a green round lump!



These remarks will prepare us to appreciate the greatness of the son, whose fame as a portrait-painter has somewhat obscured his greatness in other branches of art. Yet in vigorous, natural, dramatic design he was unrivalled, whether in his early wall-paintings, so far as we can judge what they were from relics and copies, or in the copious book-illustrations he designed.

HANS HOLBEIN, THE YOUNGER, has been said to mark distinctly the rise of the modern spirit, historic rather than devotional; he is certainly far removed from the mystical. In him the human element prevailed over every other; and the origin of genre, the style that deals with scenes of common life, may be largely traced to him. Into such subjects, it is needless to repeat, landscape constantly enters, and it is chiefly in this association, or in his Bible cuts, and shrewd moralisings like the *Dance of Death*, that landscape finds place with Holbein. When it does so, the whole spirit of the scene is indicated in a few

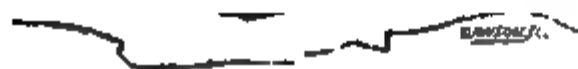


FIG. 103.—LUCERNE, FROM PART OF A  
DRAWING: HOLBEIN.

lines with wonderful truth and poetic suggestiveness. The sun is setting behind the little country church on the hill, and the husbandman, Death assisting him, ploughs his field for the last

time; the bishop leaves his flock unprotected to wander on the hills, where a lonely robber-castle stands; to the soldier, Death, beating a drum, comes posting over the moorland, bounded by distant mountains, the latter, be it observed, always admirably suggested by Holbein's vigorous lines.

But there are drawings at the Basle Museum which give landscape with much more detail as well as with wonderful freedom. In a *Virgin and Child* there is, on the right, a view of Lucerne; the covered bridge, the walls and towers, the steep-roofed houses, the pine-covered heights around, and Pilatus itself under cloud—all are there. It is a tinted pen-drawing, and the distinction is well marked between the wooded hills and the bare mountain; though a sunny scene, the lake, with a boat scudding along on the left, are in shade. (Fig. 103 gives a portion of the drawing.)

The most charming bit of landscape, however, from Holbein's hand to be found here is in a portrait (No. 12), where a mountain vista is excellently given in a cool pearly tint, with quite modern touch and feeling. FIG. 104.—A MOUNTAIN SCENE: HOLBEIN. Holbein has thoroughly caught the romantic aspect of a Swiss scene, with its solitary castle-tower. (Fig. 104.) Pity that the hunting-scenes painted by him in the old Hartenstein house at Lucerne, in which the ancestral home of the family, a castle on the shores of the lake, was shown, are now destroyed!

This vigour and skill in landscape throw doubt upon the authenticity of the *Noli me tangere* at Hampton Court. The hazy touch and tint in the distant scenery, the vivid fleck of white cloud upon a black blue sky, the look of the fir trees, the harsh hot colours of the foreground—all these remind us more of Altdorfer than of the accomplished Holbein, from whom we should surely have had landscape enough, and landscape full of meaning and power, had his art led that way.



It has been frequently noticed that Holbein showed acquaintance with the works of Mantegna, and with respect to each of these German painters the inquiry is continually arising, "How much did he know of Italy?" Now knowledge of Italy meant knowledge of the antique; that both Flemings and Germans for a long period had but a very limited acquaintance therewith is obvious from the type of face and figure prevalent in their works; indeed, it may be suggested that this very ignorance had much to do with the literal landscape-art in which they excelled. Did they find in scenery that satisfaction for their art-instinct which both Greek and Italian found in the human form? We must remember that drawing from the life must have been for northerners a slow and painful process, all the more from their fondness for precision of detail; while the tree, the rock, the mountain, immovable before them, offered easier opportunity for the exercise of their skill in rendering both form and colour. The Italian, taught by the antique, and surrounded also by finer types, drew the human form with dignity and ease, making use, when he wanted background, of the careful landscape-work of Fleming or German, till himself, turning to the study of natural scenery, he expressed it with cultured power, and eventually imparted something of this to the northerners.

It was not, however, the Italy with which we have been hitherto concerned that chiefly influenced northern art in landscape. The death of Holbein in 1543 synchronised with the full glory of an Italian school, with which we have yet to deal. Recrossing the Alps, and turning eastward, over the lagoons rises the campanile of St. Mark!

## CHAPTER XIII.

### LANDSCAPE OF THE VENETIAN SCHOOL, FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Gentile da Fabriano . 1360?—	Giovanni Bellini . 1426–1516.
Antonello da Messina . 1446?–1496?	Vittore Carpaccio . 1450?–1522?
Andrea Mantegna . 1431?–1506.	Cima da Conegliano . –1517?
Francesco Mantegna . –1516.	Marco Basaiti . . . . .
The Vivarini . . . . .	Giorgione . . . 1477–1511.
Carlo Crivelli . . 1435?–1494?	Palma Vecchio . . 1480–1528.
Gentile Bellini . . 1427?–1507.	Pordenone . . . 1483–1538.

WE have now to trace that superb development of landscape which owed its pre-eminence to the Venetian sense of colour. A subtle connection between Flemish and Venetian art has been pointed out by various writers. In wealth, in secularity, municipal independence, occupation with the outdoor world, and especially with the sea,—in such conditions the two peoples were alike, and their art was cultivated amidst similar influences. But there was also a direct connection with all northern art. In the words of Lord Lindsay—“Each of the three great branches of the northern or Teutonic school—that of Cologne, that of the Netherlands, and that of Upper Germany—sent, as it were, its distinct ambassadors to Italy.” And, we may add, each of these had particular relations with Venice or its neighbourhood. Cologne sent its painters in the middle of the fifteenth century to Padua. From the Netherlands about the same time came Van der Weyden, certainly to Ferrara. Later in that century Memlinc’s pictures were in request among Venetian magnates; and, more than all, Antonello da Messina brought to Venice the very method of the Van Eycks. Lastly, from Upper Germany, arrived Dürer, Burgkmair, and others of that school, as well as those unnamed German landscape-painters who lived for a time in Titian’s house.

Colour was a distinguishing excellence of Cologne and Netherland art; landscape was as certainly the forte of the Netherland and

German schools; while to the Netherland, the most important of the three, was due the gift of that oil medium without which we should never have had the pure lustre of Bellini, the glow of Giorgione, the splendour of Titian. But Venice must have already possessed rare assimilating qualities to have developed as she did, and as Florence did not, the Flemish art of colour and the Flemish feeling for landscape.

In the Academy at Florence is a picture by GENTILE DA FABRIANO, an *Adoration of the Kings*, to which there is attached a Predella of remarkable quality. It would be difficult to describe the subject better than Mr. Symonds has done in his *Renaissance in Italy*; he speaks of it as "a little panel which attracts attention as one of the earliest attempts to represent a sunrise. The sun has just appeared above one of those bare sweeping hill-sides so characteristic of central Italian landscape. Part of the country lies untouched by morning, cold and gray; the rest is silvered with the level light, falling sideways on the burnished leaves, and red fruit of orange trees, and casting shadows from olive branches on the furrows of a new-ploughed field. Along the road, journey Joseph and Mary with the Infant Christ, so that you may call this little landscape a *Flight into Egypt* if you choose." Mr. Symonds does not mention the curious fact that the sun is not a painted but an actually gilded ball in the sky, and that its light upon the hills is done in gold, so that those near at hand shine with a golden flame. We may add, too, that a small town is seen, bright with beams of sunrise, against a dark sky, which is carefully gradated towards the morning. In this small but interesting picture the eye is caught alike by the depth of colour, unusual for so early a work in Italy,<sup>1</sup> and by the picturesqueness of conception which lays so much stress upon landscape accessories.

Now this Gentile, of Fabriano in the "march" of Ancona—a man, therefore, of Adriatic birth—lived for some years at Venice, and painted in the ducal palace, working also at Brescia and Bergamo; and, though Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle are inclined to think that he took rich colouring to Venice rather than found it there, we cannot but believe it to be more likely that he there imbibed what was already a characteristic of the great Oriental

<sup>1</sup> Gentile is supposed to have been born about 1360 A.D., and his latest known works were painted before 1431; in date, therefore, he preceded Angelico.

Italian state. Gentile removed to Florence about 1422, and painted the *Adoration of the Kings* the following year. Still he will always keep his place in the annals of Venetian art, for Jacopo Bellini, the first of that famous family, was his pupil, along with the Vivarini (Antonio and Giovanni) of Murano.

But whatever might be due to native feeling or Oriental influences in Venetian art—an art that was never subject to that of Florence—it is certain that its greatest impetus was received from the Netherlands by means of the Sicilian painter ANTONELLO DA MESSINA (1446?-1496?), who, charmed with certain works that had been transported to Naples, repaired forthwith to Flanders on purpose to obtain the secret of their wonderful depth, purity, and transparency of colour. It has now been satisfactorily shown that the "Giovanni da Bruggia" to whom he repaired was not John van Eyck, as was long supposed, but Hans Memlinc; and when, fresh from his teaching in the mysteries of oil, Antonello settled at Venice, where he died, he brought the boon of all boons that Venice could best appreciate to her door.

As to Antonello's proficiency in landscape, we have enough to prove that Flemish examples were not lost upon him. In the ideal *Crucifixion* at Antwerp there is in the centre vista a calm blue lake, surrounded by soft vanishing hills, fainter and fainter to the extreme horizon, where they rest upon a sky of pearly gray; nearer we have the glowing meadows, the stiff trees, and the castle pleasaunce of the archaic manner; over all one still daylight that casts no shadow. In the *St. Sebastian* at Dresden again there are the same low silvery tones. It is evident that, along with technical skill in oil, Antonello had learnt to observe the exquisite tints of clear calm distance, and perhaps something more, for in the background to a portrait at the Antwerp Gallery (No. 5) he has caught the orange glow of a rich twilight over a woodland scene. The miniaturists and their imitators so seldom got beyond a white light upon the horizon that this deviation seems like a prevision of what Venetian sunsets were to teach.

But there is more than this forecast of the future in Antonello's landscape; that of the small *Crucifixion* now in the National Gallery shows as perfectly as any of the larger examples, the dawning loveliness of Venetian colour, as distinguished from the vivid beauty of the early Flemish. Instead of the minute definition of every

object characteristic of the Van Eyck school, we find, spread over a scene of the utmost simplicity, a delicious silvery haze, melting into the warm tones of a shadowless foreground. In this small picture we may see already what Venice owed to Flanders—how Venice would enrich the gift!

But before entering further upon the story of Venetian art we must diverge for a moment to Padua, where the mighty MANTEGNA (1431?–1506) spent the first strength of his genius. Except that he learnt copperplate engraving from the Germans, Mantegna owed nothing to the north, least of all had Low Country landscape any influence upon him. Nor can we expect that its charms should affect one so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of classic sculpture—one to whom the precise drawing of a foot, the accurate foreshortening of a limb, the intricate fall of drapery, gave so much delight; one to whom problems of draughtsmanship were so congenial that he would dispense with solid earth in order to depict his figures as seen upon a ledge foreshortened against the sky! When Mantegna treats landscape at all, it is evident that he cares for it only for its specimens of form—for its rock-shapes, for its support to architecture—while his realism and powers of drawing compel him to record the minutest detail. There results a landscape peculiarly his own.

Mr. Ruskin, in his *Guide to the Venice Academy*, has directed attention to a small picture, a *St. George* (No. 273), by Mantegna, for “a perfect type” of the “intelligent and severe finish characteristic of the best Italian work.” Nevertheless it is, he admits, “wholly without sentiment, though the distant landscape becomes affecting through its detailed truth—the winding road under the rocks, and the towered city being as full of little pretty things to be searched out, as a natural scene would be.” In Fig. 105 something of the general aspect of this unsentimental landscape may be seen. The arm and elbow of St. George cut off the greater portion, but it still illustrates Mantegna’s favourite landscape idea, that of a great hillside rising in one smooth slope to near the top of his picture, encircled with walls, garnished with towers, sprinkled with bushes, hot and brown all over. This long slope of hill, devised apparently that he may cover it with architecture, is introduced in one of his frescos at Padua, and is a notable feature in his fresco at Mantua of the Gonzaga family, figured in Messrs. Crowe and Caval-

caselle's *North Italy*, and in Dr. Woltmann's article upon Mantegna in the "Dohme Series." In two points only may we demur to the "wholly without sentiment" statement of Mr. Ruskin. In each of these examples there are rather fine expanses of cloud-flecked sky, and in each of them a crowning citadel lifts its distant towers, here touched with light, and there with shade, against the still ethereal.

And there is another curious feature. In the *St. George* the greater portion of the subject is taken up with, what he seldom omitted, a winding road, sunk between formal and apparently "cut" walls of rock. In his *Crucifixion* at the Louvre (No. 250) the same road winds up to Jerusalem, the same rocky walls enclose it. The triptych in the Uffizi (No. 1111) supplies another instance, and one cannot help wondering whether, like the sloping town-crested hill of which both the Euganean and the sub-Alpine country furnish examples, such a road can be identified in any neighbourhood with which Mantegna was familiar. Or could it be an importation from Flemish art? It is almost startling to discover just such a road in *The Arrival at Basle of St. Ursula* on Memlinc's famous shrine. Certain it is that, like the sloping hill, his mind constantly recurred to this deep-cut ascending road.

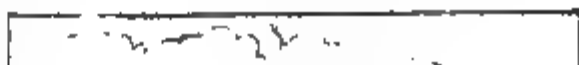


FIG. 105.—MANTEGNA'S HILLSIDE.

In the foreground of Mantegna's pictures nothing can exceed the laborious minuteness of his work. In the *Crucifixion* of the Louvre the cracks between the slabs of stone, with the ferns and weeds sprouting from them, are given with infinite pains and precision,

but with utter hardness and isolation. In the *Parnassus*, again, a quantity of queer sea-shore pebbles, fossils, lumps covered with empty shell-holes, and odd basaltic bits, are scattered about without the least attempt at grouping or generalisation. The portion of a drawing attributed to Mantegna, reproduced in Fig. 106, illustrates his singular way of building up rocks in slices, chipped and fitted together as no real observer of nature would think of doing. These are the rocks of a rockery, not even those of a quarry;<sup>1</sup> while, looking at the sky, there is the same scattering of flakes of cloud without organic connection. Mantegna never saw landscape as a whole, glowing or glooming as nature's mood might be, but only as a place crowded with a multitude of severe or curious forms; such, at least, was his characteristic treatment.

In the two allegorical pictures in the Louvre there are glimpses of distant landscape of a different kind; in one of them, seen through arches of greenery, long low hills, serene, clear, and *real*, descend to a stream which twists and turns below—all under quiet light; in the other an orange-tinted low horizon-light melts into depths of greeny tone above. Such exceptional instances of truer landscape feeling perhaps support the suggestion of Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle that these pictures are not wholly his.

As Mantegna occupies one of the high thrones of art, and had so great an influ-

FIG. 106. — MANTEGNA'S ROCKS. ence upon the opening Venetian school,

<sup>1</sup> I have been kindly allowed to make use of this part of the sketch referred to—the death of Orpheus. Certain doubts as to authenticity, suggested by the drawing of the figures, are expressed by Mr. Comyns Carr; but the rocks, at least, are entirely Mantegnesque.

it is well to draw attention to the landscape, or no landscape, of his pictures, were it only to show what Venetian art accomplished; how, aided by the Netherland influence he rejected, it took another line; what a leap it made out of the dry literalities of the Mantegna style into glorious freedom.<sup>1</sup>

At Venice BARTOLOMMEO VIVARINI, the ablest of that name, and Giovanni Bellini, greatest of his line (a son of the Jacopo already mentioned), immediately adopted the new method brought by Antonello. As to the Vivarini—without attempting to discriminate between a senior and a junior, a Bartolommeo and a Luigi—we may notice already in their sense of colour that quality which was to distinguish Venetian art, and especially to enrich its landscape. This colour, which strikes the eye at once in every gallery, consists not only in an extraordinary golden glow, but in a rarer speciality, a peculiar, deep-toned chord of harmony. Both characteristics may be traced to local conditions. Sir Charles Eastlake was the first to remark that “the daily spectacle of the summer sun setting behind the Friuli mountains accounted for the golden and mellow horizons behind blue mountains, which are so common a feature in Venetian pictures.” He observes also that the Venetian painters were in the habit of looking at nature most in the evening, “when shadows are soft, when local colours are hence not destroyed by violent opposition of light and shade, . . .”—a time when “all is warmed by the glow of the sky and atmosphere.” This certainly is the hour when the gondola skims afar, and when the Venetian at his ease floats in a sea of glory, obtaining, as Eastlake also noticed, “in the tranquillity and isolation of a gondola” more opportunity for observing effects than in walking, driving, or riding. “I am quite convinced,” he says, “that one main cause of the excellence of the Venetians in a large imitation of nature was the simple circumstance of their being able to use their eyes without even the trouble of walking about. This advantage is very great, and to be met with *nowhere else*.”<sup>2</sup>

But Mr. Symonds calls attention to another point, “that while the predominant colour of Florence is brown . . . the predominant colour of Venice is that of mother-of-pearl, concealing within its

<sup>1</sup> Mantegna's son, Francesco, shows in No. 639, National Gallery, some advance upon his father's landscape. An old tree-trunk is carefully studied, as well as the vine-leaves hanging from it. The detail, too, of the rocks is good; but there is no blending in the landscape, and the bushes are like gilt cabbages.

<sup>2</sup> Eastlake's *Contributions to the Literature of the Fine Arts*, 2d series, pp. 129, 130.



general whiteness every tint that can be placed upon the palette of the painter."<sup>1</sup> We may add, there is not only a whiteness but a soft gloom in which these mother-of-pearl tints mingle, and that here also we may trace the influence of local conditions. There are no grass-greens in Venice, there are no arid hillsides, or tints of autumn upon woods; but there are the indescribable hues of shallow and shadowed water, of distant and dim shores, of the sky veiled often with a sea haze; and, surrounded by these, we need not wonder that it is characteristic of Venetian painters to subdue the strong primary colours either by black or white, so that shades of a warm gray are frequent, while the whole, as a rule, leans towards purple; they prefer the lake tints among the reds, the purple among the blues, the orange among the yellows; and they constantly, like nature herself in the vivid plumage of birds, introduce separating tints of black to sober the brilliance.<sup>2</sup>

Upon the whole we should be inclined to think that though the lagoons at evening offer wonderful combinations of low-toned though gorgeous colours, it is in the water-tints of the canals that we may detect, more than anywhere else, the main source of the peculiar Venetian colouring. All colours are there—in that water which is the pavement of their streets—reflected from above, shot darkly from below, all wondrously modulated, blended, subdued, transparent, and tending towards depths of greeny-purple and purple-brown, much as we see them in Murano glass. Now it is not difficult to see that such a scale of colour subserves a higher style of landscape than we have found either in Florence, Flanders, or Germany, a landscape in which the cerulean gloom of mountains and of clouds, the purple distances of plain and sea, should for the first time be sympathetically rendered.

But Venetian colour was not developed at once; indeed, its full tones came out late, and then died speedily away. CRIVELLI (1435?—1494?), contemporary with the Vivarini, though he wished to be considered a Venetian, scarcely validates his claim by his works, unless it be by a certain depth of tone. In the landscape of the *Beato Ferretti* at the National Gallery, though there is no air nor distance, and the scene with its numerous objects is all to pieces,

<sup>1</sup> Symond's *Renaissance in Italy*, p. 354.

<sup>2</sup> Is it not among Venetian pictures especially that we have the vivid sheen of black armour introduced?

there is yet this quality of tone, as may be felt if the eye be turned to the gay confectionery rocks of Benozzo Gozzoli in the same room. In the Brera a *Crucifixion* has the same strange airless landscape, with winter trees and evergreens, brown hills, a castle, every brick defined, as is every shrub at the foot of the walls, and the perspective all wrong. There is nothing but a tenderly touched sky to redeem it. It is in fact not the Venetian but the Paduan influence, in the person of Mantegna, which we recognise in Crivelli.

It is in the BELLINI family—in Jacopo (assistant to Gentile da Fabriano, and father-in-law of Mantegna), and in Jacopo's two sons, Gentile and Giovanni, both living to a great age—that we may trace almost the whole history of Venetian art to the date of its highest splendour. And of these the story of Giovanni alone is sufficient for the purpose—the great Giovanni! who with one hand grasps Mantegna, and with the other leads Giorgione and Titian up to fame, and in whose school all the finest art of Venice was trained.

Yet GENTILE (died 1507), the elder of the two, should not be left without a word. For a long time he was of equal reputation with his brother, but his undoubted eminence is not adequately represented by the remains we possess of his art. With respect to our subject we can only remark that from his picture of *The Miracle of the Cross*, in the Academy, in which a Venetian canal and bridge are shown, we may see how excellently he understood perspective and the softening effects of atmosphere. He, too, was the first teacher of Titian.

GIOVANNI BELLINI (1426-1516) lived longer, and achieved, though perhaps only through that advantage, greater things; to him especially we owe a great advance in landscape. Yet here his power was of slow growth. Educated in the studio of his father Jacopo at Padua, he was largely influenced at first by his brother-in-law Mantegna, and not to his benefit in landscape. Of this we may see an instance in the *Agony in the Garden* at the National Gallery, a picture at one time assigned to Mantegna. That the Saviour's "hour of darkness" should be represented in the midst of a widespread scene shows the growing tendency; but we should certainly attribute to the great Paduan the singular rocky character of that scene—so brown, so hard, so odd, as if carved out of wood—

and the queer little details, thought, we may suppose, suitable to a "garden" in the ideas of the time—the canal with its little waves, the little bridge, and the elaborately winding paths. These things are quite in the manner of Mantegna; there is even in the distance something like his deep-cut road leading up to Jerusalem. A leafless tree (for the winter season is borne in mind) is characteristic of Bellini, but is not treated so picturesquely as afterwards by his pupil, Basaiti, in the similar subject in the Venice Academy. But, early and immature specimen as this is of Bellini's power, there is in it not only a prognostication of his splendid colour, but indication of his poetical feeling. We see this in the weird reflected light which tinges everything. Although "it was night" at that hour of the Passion, the glow that had poured through the window of the "upper chamber" had not quite departed; striking upward from the horizon it vividly illuminates the clouds; repeated to earth, it shines upon the distant city, just as he might have seen Venice shine against a darkling sky when he had put off upon the lagoon at sunset.

This picture is in tempera, and so also was the great subject of the *Virgin and Saints*, painted about 1472 for SS. Giovanni e Paolo, and which, long challenging comparison with Titian's *Peter Martyr*, perished with it. This has been regarded as in some great qualities Bellini's grandest work, but it was so apart from landscape; Bellini's power in landscape begins with his adoption of the oil method, brought shortly before by Antonello da Messina from Flanders to Venice.

But the change is gradual. In a small panel, stated by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle to belong (at the time of the Manchester Exhibition) to S. Dingwall, Esq., they tell us that "nowhere is a clearer insight to be obtained into Giovanni's efforts to represent with a still viscous medium, and without much variety of tint, the accidental changes in a sunless landscape, and at the same time to preserve his old feeling for gravity, dignity, repose." That "sunlessness" is significant. The varnishes hitherto in use for panels had induced a universal brownness; and if presently Bellini can give the clear opaline tints of day, as well as that diffused golden glow which prepares us for Giorgione and Titian, he does not do so at once. In the great *Coronation of the Virgin* at Pesaro there is still brownness; but in the predella pictures a wonderfully rich effect. In *The Transfiguration*, at Naples, while still in his brownish stage, we have "an extensive view of a North Italian district, into the nooks

and corners of which he leads us, showing the heights of the hills, their modulations and distances, by contrasts of tint and by atmosphere. One sees that summer has gone, an autumn day has broken; some trees have leaves, others are bare of foliage, the herdsman drives out his cattle at dawn, people meet, and oxen graze at the sides of a stream under the protection of manorial towers. . . . It is here at last that we find Giovanni Bellini, great as a painter in oil, applying the secrets of manipulation brought over from the Netherlands by Antonello, patiently, like the Van Eycks, entering into every detail."<sup>1</sup> Thus Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle. But Bellini is still far below his ultimate height in landscape. The foreground of this picture is frightfully cut about and hard, its colours hot, brown, and green, though such perhaps as Giorgione imitated. The growing power is seen only in the wonderful realism of the white cumulus clouds, upon which are concentrated the principal lights of the picture, and which, barred with level lines of cirro-stratus, rest upon the long horizon. The dark hills which rise against this majestic mass of cloud are also very carefully studied in their striations. In this study of clouds Van Eyck's was certainly not the example followed by Bellini; rather, in the matter of form, were they due to Mantegna's tutoring. Their significance was seen by some yet greater than himself; for it is now, let us mark, that the cloud-world begins to reveal itself to art, and it is the art of a city of the sea.

To the period still anterior to that of his mature splendour we should attribute *The Death of Peter Martyr* (812) National Gallery.<sup>2</sup> There is a want in it of that freedom, largeness, and force which he shows at his best, and it is pervaded by greeny-brown tones without ærial brilliance; yet it is remarkable as showing not a landscape background only, but as being purely a landscape picture. It is plain that, like Titian after him, and like, indeed, the illuminators of Flemish manuscripts before him, he felt the charm of gray stems, of trees thickly grouped together, and through which light breaks in glimpses. The foliage is still made up of individual leaves, and the herbage shows its every blade. The foreground, however, is a great improvement upon Mantegna's manner, for the stones and

<sup>1</sup> *Painting in North Italy*, i. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle suppose that this picture may have been painted as late as 1506 to send to the Marchioness of Mantua. They admit, however, that no record has been preserved of the despatch of a picture to Mantua at all, and if it were so, having been much teased about it, he might have sent one painted some time before.

sandy soil are indicated and blended instead of defined and polished up. Although it is high summer, a bare-boughed tree shoots up its slim lines into the sky, where too a blue hill lies sweetly against the far low light. If the town be, as Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle suggest, Castelfranco (and the mount and wall are somewhat like it), he has added the hills, or brought them nearer, for that town lies in the middle of a rich plain. And let us note the singular want of sympathy between the absolutely domestic scenery and the deed of murder!—people are busy as usual in the summer day as if no horror were in progress.

Of a rich brown tone, indicating the same transition stage in Bellini's course, is another National Gallery picture (280), a *Virgin and Child*; but here there are two charming though very simple little peeps of landscape, one on either side. To the right is just a bushy hill with a town-wall and towers crowning it; the quiet calm is all we have to note in this. But on the left, one is surprised to find an Italian introducing a veritable snow-mountain, rising with craggy top into the deep blue sky; while in front some precipitous dark-green hills—dark against the snows—are reminiscent of those lower heights, topped with castles or towers, that girdle the Venetian plain; not less true to the region is the solitary building rising out of the shades, and catching a stray gleam. Here again Bellini obviously differs from Van Eyck, to whom, as we have already remarked when speaking of Dürer, snow-mountains were mostly pleasurable for their pure sparkle, for the finish they gave to his gay landscape. In Bellini, as in Dürer (but certainly not imitated from one who was then only some five years old), there is poetry, a feeling for the ghostly beauty of the snow; the two men had much in common, and we wonder not that when, in the maturity of his fame, Dürer visited Venice he wrote to Pirkheimer that "Giambellinus has praised me highly before several gentlemen, and he wishes to have something of my painting; he came himself and asked me to do something for him, saying he would pay me well for it."<sup>1</sup>

The first absolutely triumphant work of Bellini in oil appears to have been the noble *San Giobbe* in the Academy at Venice (painted probably about 1475); but thenceforth all is triumph, for the grand old man seems to have known no decay—nay, rather to have advanced from strength to strength. In this picture there is

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Heaton's *Life of Dürer*, p. 72.

no landscape; but in that at Murano of the *Doge Barbarigo*, kneeling before the Virgin and Child, and dated 1488, a charming scene occupies the right-hand side; a walled town, with its many towers, rises upon the side of a steep hill; and beyond, hill upon hill, lifts itself in the pure translucent air and under a tender sky, where level lines of cirrus express a perfect calm. In front—and we cannot but remark his fondness for it—a slender tree throws aloft, and with abundant grace, its delicate bare branches (Fig. 107). The superb *Madonna and Child with Saints*, in S. Zaccaria, Venice,

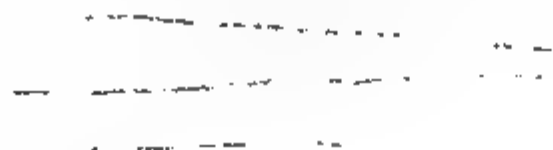


FIG. 107.—BELLINI'S LANDSCAPE OF THE BARBARIGO PICTURE AT MURANO.

painted in 1505, when he was seventy-eight, witnesses to his undiminished vigour. Nothing can exceed its clear, soft, harmonious brilliance. The slips of landscape are indeed unimportant; but there is an exquisite bit of daylight, with a delicately-touched tree defined against sky and cloud, and the gray mountain beneath; for, let us observe, with all the splendour there is still the chaste beauty of a pearly gray, and when we admire a similar beauty in Carpaccio, Cima, or Basaiti we must remember that these all worked at some period either with or under Bellini, and coincidentally with the development of his clear splendour.

But Bellini has other thoughts than those of morning peace.

FIG. 108.—BELLINI'S LANDSCAPE OF THE MADONNA AT S. FRANCESCO DELLA VIGNA.

As he descends into venerable age he grows in fancy, and well might Dürer, writing during that visit to Venice in 1506, say of him, "he is very old, but he is still the best." It is in 1507, and at the age of eighty years, that he painted the *Madonna and Saints* at S. Francesco della Vigna; grievously injured, and in almost dungeon gloom, we can still recognise in the background a fine landscape conception. One long, dark, level cloud has lifted to show along the horizon a strip of the glowing west; all else is twilight. The buildings of a convent with its campanile are dimly seen against this light; the nearer hills rise in purple darkness, and upon the sloping sides of one, there is shown with admirable fidelity the gathering of an evening cloud that rolls upward to its summit. But from the sketch appended (Fig. 108) the character of this poetic scene will be better understood.

Then, later still, there is the *St. Jerome* at S. Crisostomo, in Venice, painted in 1513, of which Mr. Ruskin speaks so highly. We must quote his words: "The landscape is as perfect and beautiful as any background may legitimately be, and, as far as it goes, finer than anything of Titian's. It is remarkable for the absolute truth of its sky, whose blue, clear as crystal, and, though deep in tone, bright in the open air, is gradated to the horizon with a cautiousness and finish

almost inconceivable; and to obtain light at the horizon, without contradicting the system of chiaroscuro adopted in the figures which are lighted from the right hand, it is barred across with some glowing white cirri, which in their turn are opposed by a single dark horizontal line of lower cloud; and, to throw the whole farther back, there is a wreath of rain-cloud of warmer colour floating above the mountains, lighted on its under edge, whose faithfulness

FIG. 109.—BELLINI'S ST. JEROME AT S. CRISOSTOMO, VENICE.

to nature both in hue and in its irregular and shattering form is altogether exemplary. The wandering of the light among the hills is equally studied, and the whole is crowned by the grand realisation of the leaves of the fig-tree alluded to at p. 207 of the second volume."<sup>1</sup>

Full of this eloquent description the spectator will be at first disappointed, as in an ill-lighted and smoke-darkened church he discovers this masterpiece of Bellini's, of which the landscape forms but a small portion. The more, however, this is studied, the more

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Painters*, i. 84.



the beauty and suggestiveness of the scene will be felt. Fig. 109 will show the general effect, but cannot render the delicate gradations.

Of very different character, inferior in feeling, but full of versatile fancy, are the five small allegorical subjects in the Academy at Venice. Mr. Ruskin, in his "Notes," expresses a special interest in them, and they are indeed wonderful in colour, delicacy, and richness,—genuine gems of art, although the meaning is too complex and obscure to be interpreted alike by any of the interpreters. In one there is Venus in a boat—or at least a lovely lady without attire—as she glides along at sunset, companioned with lovely boys, amid deep-toned rolling hills. In another, called by some *Labour*, it is broad daylight, and there is a delicious confusion of verdant hills around. *Malice* (or is it, as Mr. Ruskin says, *Lust*?) has in the background a town sinking into twilight. *Fortune*, or *Opportunity*, is surrounded by an ornamental landscape too artificial for true art.

The date of these curious pictures is unknown, but they are pretty certainly late; for it is remarkable that the old man who in his youth had handled with such severe solemnity of feeling the sacred garden scene, and who spent the greater part of his life reverently portraying the Holy Mother and the Saints, should, as we know, at the end of his days have descended to the company of rollicking gods and goddesses, leaving unfinished at his death the *Orgy*, now at Alnwick. Here also is landscape, but it was probably added by Titian, since the picture is known to have been committed to his care, and the scene is laid below the castle-rock of Cadore.

This change speaks perhaps of the general moral degeneracy of the age into which Bellini's life was prolonged, and of his quick artistic sympathy to the last, with a current style of subject, rather than of any taint in his personal character. "They all tell me what a good man he is," wrote Dürer, and, take him all in all, we must render him profound homage.

We have already mentioned three of Giovanni's many pupils or assistants—Carpaccio, Cima, and Basaiti; these all worked on the lines of their master, and imitated the landscape of his mature time, but, with all their merits, did not advance beyond a certain level of excellence. They are not marked by that original genius which sets foot upon new territory.

VITTORE CARPACCIO (1450 ?—1522 ?) is among the chief of these. Educated partly by the Vivarini, and then a scholar and perhaps assistant to Gentile Bellini, and associated with Giovanni in certain works, he is closely connected with the opening glories of Venetian art. Not that he was Venetian born; like most of the artists of that school he came from the mainland, and even, it is said, from Istria. His favourite subjects being historical events of the outdoor world, in which, therefore, sea and land, cities and palaces take part, landscape becomes a prime feature in his work, and is treated with vigour and great effect of colour.

He is seen at his best in the series illustrating the story of St. Ursula at the Venice Academy, and in the panels representing incid-



FIG. 110.—LANDSCAPE FROM A PICTURE AT S. ALVISE: CARPACCIO.

ents in the lives of the patron saints of Dalmatia at S. Giorgio de' Schiavone. In these his mastery of perspective is evident. Of one of the St. Ursula series Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle say: "from the nearest tower on the bank to the gate near the horizon; from the foremost caravel . . . to the felucca that sails on the farthest waters, every part is made to vanish in due proportion." This is high praise, and no less indicative of his landscape aptitudes is the mention of the skill with which "in broad touches the busy people, seen from a distance, on the piers and quays" are represented. Aërial perspective was indeed as familiar to him as the linear. "Conscious of his power . . . he never shrank from attempting the most difficult effects of sunlight on fields, on hills, on water, or on buildings." All this is perfectly true. In the *Patriarch of Grado* at the Venice Academy there is quite a romantic effect got out of an array of chimneys by skilful grouping and management of light and shade. But he excels in other than the glow of sunlight. In rendering a distant sea and islands, such as he had continually within

sight, he is often admirable in tone. In one of the St. Ursula series at the Academy the distance, quite Venetian, is of this sort. So also in the eight small pictures at the seldom visited church of S. Alvise, attributed to him, the feeling for distant water and evening light is remarkable. They were, it is said, early works which the vague attempt at a winter tree in Fig. 110 renders likely, but there is a good deal of sentiment among the scenes as a whole.

At Berlin there are two pictures in which his landscape shows to advantage. In a *Holy Family* there is a fine distance of rocks,

FIG. 111.—ARCH OF ROCKS AT S. GIORGIO DE' SCHIAVONE: CARPACCIO.

and an old building stands out against a gray-blue evening sky, in which soft dark clouds are flitting. In the *Consecration of St. Stephen* there, we have, on the other hand, a landscape full of daylight, and a lustrous distance fading away with ineffable sweetness. The same cannot be said of *The Madonna and Child enthroned*, of the National Gallery; but though here there is no atmospheric glow, there is a certain truth in the light, seemingly of morning, that touches the hills—the hills that subside along the shore—it silvers their craggy edges and tips the wandering walls that climb the heights.

But there are great defects in the landscape of Carpaccio. He is

fond of the fantastic, and will pile up curiosities of landscape detail, Chinese fashion. Look, for instance, at the strange rock with its trees stuck on at the sides, in one of the subjects from the Ursula series in the Academy; or again at the arch of rocks in Fig. 111, from the Dalmatian set. Some landscapes, indeed, as in No. 542 of the Ursula series, are so absurd, with their impossible hills and rocks, as to suggest another hand. And we must add that he has small acquaintance with trees; but this may be forgiven to a Venetian, who, on the contrary, is seldom amiss with his clouds.

A painter far more satisfactory in landscape than Carpaccio, one, indeed, who is often perfectly delightful, is CIMA DA CONEGLIANO—that pleasant castled town which overlooks from its isolated hill the plain north of Treviso. There is something of the nimbleness of mountain air in that district, and Cima's tender brightness is his great charm. He was born in the middle of the fifteenth century, and died probably about 1517.

In No. 582 at the Venice Academy (*A Virgin and Child enthroned with Saints*) there is infinite daylight in the landscape; a brown middle distance has, it must be confessed, the lumpy inexpressiveness of the earlier men, but hills bathed in the tints of an exquisitely lucent atmosphere rise beyond it, one soaring blue mountain with steep sides being especially delightful both in form and colour. Light floating clouds glitter in the sky, and the suffused daylight of the whole is wonderful, while yet it is a light which, luminous as it is, has far more of gray in it—the gray of Bellini—than, for example, we find in the clear skies of Francia. Cima's tints, in fact, answer to that mother-of-pearl lustre, that “concealed whiteness” of which Mr. Symonds has spoken. For another instance we may go to the *Madonna dell' Orto*, where, in its famous *John the Baptist*, one of Cima's first works in oil, the gray lustre of the sky is perfection. A town shines like a bright little model, too clean and fresh for human habitation; but its churches, towers, walls, heaped one upon another, and glowing in sunlight, captivate the eye. Morning is his favourite time—morning among the hills; and then and there, probably, the painter enjoyed more happiness than any twilight gondola could give him. In Venice, however, at the Carmine, there is a *Nativity* with a finely-toned evening light, as well as remarkable picturesqueness of incident, in an overhanging rock with ferns and drooping tendrils; and a tree of modern freedom.

Of this overhanging rock let us observe, in passing, that it is quite different from that of the Flemings, referred to by Lord Lindsay, as imitated by the Florentine painters. Cima's is of the nature of a side scene, and becomes the prototype of a feature in a much later phase of landscape.

But these are all instances of background only. In a small circular picture at Parma, attributed to Cima, there is a true landscape, one of the earliest instances to be found of a subject which has landscape for its chief motive. This is a charming little piece. Just to give it a name, Endymion lies asleep beside a brook—the brook of an Alpine meadow through which it comes winding and twisting in a deep-worn bed, bordered by graceful trees. Pollards are scattered in the distance, and mountains, lovely in their tender blueness, rise with fine outlines beyond. The brook falls with one smooth cascade, whose murmur favours slumber; Endymion's dog, some rabbits, rather out of proportion, and a fawn are all asleep. Two cranes alone are wakeful—they stand watching for fish. No descending figure breaks the stillness, but the crescent moon has fallen from the sky, and hovers among the trees. It is as sweet a little idyll as was ever put on panel! (Fig. 112.)

Cima, whose real name was Giovanni Battista, takes his title in art from the "Cima," the rocky castled "height" of his native place, and that picturesque feature appears in many of his pictures; we meet with it in this same gallery of Parma. The familiar castle stands, not, as now, surrounded with cypresses, but amongst round-foliaged trees in one rich glow of colour, under a soft clear sky. It appears, too, in the *Baptism* at S. Giovanni, in Bragora, Venice; in the Brera (294), finely against an horizon light; and in a landscape of great beauty in the *Madonna* at the Louvre. In this last, however, the familiar hill and background of mountain occupies but a small portion of the scene; and there are symptoms in some strange-looking overhanging crags of the Flemish influence which it took some time for the purer Italian taste to overcome.

But the most interesting scene from his native Cisalpine country may be found in his *Madonna, Child, and Donor* (No. 7) at Berlin. The background is remarkable for its extensive landscape, with the long line of the Serravalle hills receding westward; the whole prospect is ruled from the red west, which excellently defines with shadow the rifts of the mountain range. Set against the mountains and towering into the sky are Conegliano and its castle; and, below, a

country house with its ornamental garden. Notwithstanding a middle distance, too brown and dark, the whole is a record of a real evening spent on the terrace of some Conegliano villa. At Dresden also are two pictures in which the Serravalle hills appear. In No. 215 we recognise again the old brown castle, and the surging brown

FIG. 112.—ALPINE MEADOW-SCENE: CIMA, PARMA GALLERY.

hill-tops beyond; there is a fine pensiveness in the effect. In No. 216, on the contrary, the Serravalle hills are dressed in radiant blue. But these two pictures have been restored. In our National Gallery are two examples of the Conegliano scenery, but the brilliant daylight that so distinguishes Cima is strangely absent.

MARCO BASAITI belongs to the same epoch and the same schools as Cima—beginning, that is, with the Vivarini, and passing on into

the atelier or into the imitation of the Bellini. Dates of birth and death are unknown, but he was working in Venice between 1490 and 1520; and though born at Venice he is, from his name and the testimony of some authorities, judged to have been of Greek origin. Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, remarking that some writers report him to have been a native of Friuli, suggest that his early life was passed at Serravalle, where the Alpine hills, so often painted by Cima, subside into the Venetian plain; and there is certainly every indication in his pictures that his landscape inspiration was derived from a hill-country.

Landscape enters largely into Basaiti's pictures, and is a strange mixture of the altogether charming with the arid, hot, and grotesque. *The Virgin and Child in a Meadow* at the National Gallery fully justifies the former description. The exquisite opaline purity of its daylight, the delicacy and finish of every detail, the walls and towers of the little town serene in the rays of morning, and the mountain ranges, pure and lovely in definition—all these graces make this picture one of the joys of art. Turning to the *St. Jerome* (281) in the same gallery—a replica of a larger work at Padua, we find rocks hard, dark, and brown—studied, as to form, from a quarry. Here, as in Mantegna, whom we may suppose he had followed, the close finish contributes only to unreality; the rocks are manufactured out of blocks and pieces, without any of nature's gentle touches or modifying tints. Yet in the distance is one of his gems of landscape. The small hill-town, the folds of the mountain forms, all bathed in the sweetest of morning light, are admirable. That St. Jerome was only a figure to set off the landscape is evident. A picture attributed to Basaiti in the Uffizi (631, *A Sacred Allegory*), and one in the Brera (*St. Jerome*, 126) show the same amazing rocks of umber, though the former has something of Giorgione's blaze and depth, but it is unrelieved by any lovely distance; the latter is now ascribed to Cima.

Basaiti, with some happy perceptions of his own, seems to have been much influenced by greater men, becoming at last very Bellinesque in manner. This trick of imitation accounts for the perplexing diversities we have noticed. In the Academy at Venice are two pictures illustrating this. In one, *Christ Praying in the Garden*, there is sweet and tender feeling in the landscape; particularly striking is the leafless tree—symbol of the Saviour's desolation, as well as true to the season—lifting forlorn boughs against the evening



light. The Divine figure at its foot is more than usually worthy of the subject. In the *Calling of the Sons of Zebedee*, on the other hand, the great landscape is washy, and the hills lumpy, brown, and dull. Basaiti here is not only inferior to Cima, but inferior to himself. When, however, we compare with this a replica now at the Belvedere, Vienna—executed five or six years afterwards, when he was under the influence both of Palma and Giovanni Bellini—we find a great superiority in delicacy of perception and treatment. The translucent water winds amidst be-castled hills, which rise against a sweet morning sky; while especially to be noticed are the thin streaks of cloud intersecting the mountains, here light against the shadowed hollows, there dark as they float across the more distant illuminated slope of hill.

Other pictures of Basaiti's in which landscape occupies a large place are an *Assumption* at S. Pietro Martire, Murano, in which a noble Madonna is associated with an imposing landscape, though composed only of low hills and barren slopes; and a *St. Sebastian* at the "Salute," Venice, in which distant evening light between the stems of trees shows some poetical feeling. But we should be inclined to say that nowhere does Basaiti's landscape show to such advantage as in the example first quoted from the National Gallery. Unfortunately there is some doubt as to the authorship.

We spoke of the homage which we must accord to Bellini; it is wonder and admiration, rather than homage, that we are expected to feel before the works of GIORGIONE. But where are his works? They continually elude us when we desire to estimate his greatness. Again and again we are revolted by a hot glare, coarse drawing, violent effects of light and shade, and then are relieved to find that the most trustworthy criticism entirely disputes the authenticity of such works, and that those only which show "an exquisite soberness," "a grand balance of chiaroscuro and illuminating power,"<sup>1</sup> show also the best pedigree. Still, as the Giorgionesque pictures, of which there are many, always possess certain qualities, it is difficult to believe that "an exquisite soberness" was his prevailing characteristic; and it is to be remembered that the young Titian's work upon the Fondaco at Venice was expressly admired as displaying, in comparison with the renowned Giorgione's achievements upon the same building, "a simplicity, a moderation, a tenderness" in his harmonious

<sup>1</sup> Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *History of Painting in North Italy*, ii. 152 and 144.



hues; that he "moderated the fire of Giorgione, whose strength lay in resolute action, fanciful movement, and a mysterious artifice in disposing shadows contrasting darkly with hot red lights."<sup>1</sup> Such testimony obliges us not to make the genuineness of a Giorgione depend entirely upon its "soberness," while it points out where imitators might easily exaggerate, and win considerable success.

But, whatever may be the doubts which surround any particular picture attributed to Giorgione, there is no question of his surpassing power, and what concerns us most is that his name is a landmark in the history of landscape-art. He it was who introduced the *Conversation Piece*, in which high-born personages sit and sing and flirt in the summer air. But we must bear in mind how much literature was tending that way. The romances of chivalry had already brought in the talk of high-born knights and ladies under bowers of roses, and then the revival of learning revived the old Arcadia, though under different and courtly conditions. Boccaccio had made a palace in the country the place of his story-telling; and in 1502, when Giorgione was twenty-five, the Neapolitan poet Sannazzaro published his *Arcadia* with great success. A yet nearer influence was that of Bembo's *Asolani*, published three years later; for Asolo, where the scene of those dull dialogues was laid, and where in 1489 Catarina Cornaro had fixed her court, overlooks, from its lovely slopes of intermingled vine and oak copse, the rich plain where Castelfranco's moated walls "stand fast."

At Castelfranco, then the stronghold of a noted Condottiere, Giorgione was born. (1477-1511.) It was no large place, and, though now the plain shows only elaborate cultivation, we may well believe that in those days the "country for miles around was but half cultivated, half covered with primitive vegetation," and the stream flowing through its midst "was fringed with stately wood."<sup>2</sup> No one in times of peace would stay within the narrow rectangular area of the high dark walls when afternoon began to turn the landscape golden; and outside there was not only stream and wood, smooth sward and vineyard, but, to the north, the Alpine heights in purple glory—for no snow-peaks disturbed the rich harmony of colour, no dolomite sent its pale splinters to the sky, but wooded steepes, soft downs and beetling crags alternated with lofty yet graceful mountain forms. Amongst them, on one of the nearer hills,

<sup>1</sup> Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *Life of Titian*, p. 92, quotation from Zanetti.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Painting in North Italy*, ii. 122.

about fifteen miles away, shone the towers of Asolo; and to the south, at about an equal distance, lay Padua, backed by the lovely blue of the Euganean hills.

This is the landscape of Giorgione. It is an open landscape of fields, groves, and streams, of farmhouses, uplands, and blue hills. It is in such scenes and not in the formal "pleasaunce" that he arranges his people with cloak and feather, guitar and flute, and sometimes, sooth to say, whether for colour's sake or to keep up an Arcadian suggestion, a glowing "nude." Now, remembering in what sort of trim grove or garden the Asolani dialogues took place,<sup>1</sup> this picturesque freedom of Giorgione is remarkable. He prefers nature unadorned. His notion of a happy afternoon is to spend it amidst the careless beauty of common country scenes. Surely we may see in this, as in the wilds of Dürer, and the cloud and mountain effects of Bellini, as, still more, in those of Titian and Tintoret, that the painters of those days were in advance of the poets in their appreciation of nature?

The one picture assigned without possibility of doubt to Giorgione is the *S. Liberale* altar-piece at Castelfranco. In this picture the perspective and the whole arrangement have apparently been adopted to suit the landscape, which occupies a full third of the space. It is a wide expanse—calm, cloudless, restful in its peace. A tower of Castelfranco, some trees, bushes, and a quiet road that loses itself in shade, compose the foreground; but beyond this, as if to mark that Venice was his second home, comes a wide sea-view, with far hills for shore, and here and there a little nestling town. One band of light lies along the distant waters, and shows how Giorgione understood the flitting beauties of the sea. In this landscape there is indeed all that "soberness" which we should be glad to believe was the truest characteristic of his style.

Two pictures in the Uffizi, the *Ordeal of Moses* and the *Judgment of Solomon*, are considered authentic but earlier works. Both contain landscape which to the writer appears hot and hard, with heavy browns, and trees intensely defined and dark. But Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle rank them much more highly, and it is fair to the reader to quote their opinion. With respect to the first, they speak of "the broken ground crested with wood, the varied and tender leafing, the light spangles amidst the twigs, the diverse shades of intensely bright foliage, relieved upon each other or thrown upon

<sup>1</sup> See chapter iii. p. 43.

the radiant sky; the blue mountains, from which the nearer slopes and towers are so cleverly parted,—all this, if not so perfectly harmonious or in keeping—so subtle as Bellini would have made it—is laid in with exquisite touch and minuteness of finish.” In the second of the pictures named there is the same predominance of landscape; “the screen of trees opening out at the sides shows the wooded undulations of country, lined with saplings, bushes, towers, and habitations, but with more vividness of tone, more variety of ground and episode, yet not more gorgeous vegetation; and the country is the same seen from a more interesting side.” Whether or not agreeing in the admiration expressed by these authorities, they well describe the character of the scenery in these pictures; and it is peculiarly Giorgionesque—in other words, it is the scenery of Castelfranco. It appears again in a *Nativity* (Mr. Beaumont’s), where, quoting from the same writers, “in the distance the bare hillside is yellow, lighted in the setting sun by the glow of coming evening; the square tower commands the houses around, all steeped in vague atmosphere.” Here, too, there is much delicate detail; “reeds, pebbles of transparent colour are minutely made out.” Yet there is something very different from the minuteness of Mantegna, for “the rocks are of a soft, worn, vague texture,” though the “greenery is sharply made out and delicately finished, cropping from the fissures.” This power of generalisation without lack of finish is one of the chief notes of Venetian art.

Landscape continually asserts itself in Giorgione’s pictures as of at least equal importance with the figures; and in the so-called *Chaldean Sages* at Vienna we have, to our mind, one of his finest landscape thoughts. (Fig. 113.) The time, as we cannot but insist, is early morning—not sunset, as has been described;<sup>1</sup> morning, when, whether as sun-worshippers or observers of celestial phenomena, the Eastern sages have assembled, or remained after night watching, to mark the moment of sunrise. Nothing can exceed the delicacy and sweetness of the sky tints, which, far removed from hotness, are those cool pink and primrose flushes which only early morning grants. A heavy mass of rock, “vague,” yet true in texture, and fringed with pendant grasses, shuts in the scene on the left; one slim and delicate autumn sapling rises from its base, and feathers with golden leafage against the slowly glowing sky, of

<sup>1</sup> Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *History of Painting in North Italy*, ii. 135. They call it “the gloom of evening.”

which the dusky redness on the actual horizon is admirably true; on the other side smooth dark boles, stems, and branchlets make lattice-work against the light. A distant peep of mountain is purple-blue, but the low grassy hills of the middle distance, dim and broken, lie in pale amber tints of morning; amongst them a house or two and a tower are faintly catching light in the early stillness. It is a most suggestive, restful, and silent scene. Let us note, before we pass, the simple grandeur of the rocky screen, all one

FIG. 113.—THE CHALDEAN SAGES: GIORGIONE, VIENNA.

gloom, except a dusk reflection on the upper corner; also that the foreground slopes, upon which the figures stand, are not hard cut like Mantegna's work, but fused and softened with the magic touch of nature. Altogether we know no purer instance of Giorgione's landscape power.

The Dresden picture—*The Meeting of Jacob and Rachel*—the genuineness of which is denied by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, has certainly little in common with this Vienna masterpiece, so far as delicacy and tenderness are concerned. The trees are hot lumpy masses; the touch is everywhere coarse; but there is one fine long

slope of hill suggestive of a deal of country, and it ends in one dark stretch of distant sea. In this there is poetical feeling, but it is not beyond the scope of lesser men and imitators, and perhaps Morelli is right in assigning it to Bonifazio.

But the *Domestic Subject*, some say representing himself and his wife, at the Manfrini Palace, Venice, is more in the accepted tradition, if it shows<sup>1</sup> "the beautiful quiet of a delicious vale, in which the air, the trees, the hills and banks and the buildings, towers, bridge, lie basking in sunshine." And there is something more than the tradition when we find that "a cloud lowers in the sky," and that "lightning darts from under its darkened edge." Lightning? have we met with this before? or if there has been ere now some conventional representation of it, surely we may say that it has never yet flashed from under the darkened edge of such a cloud! While, if it be intended to symbolise some dark fate that burst upon hitherto sunny lives, we have a new and striking use of landscape in connection with human destiny.

The *Concert Champêtre*, Louvre, No. 39, is full of rich landscape feeling. It is broad, noble, massive in conception; the clouds lie in one majestic mass, stretching all their length across the sky, and the half light upon the horizon is broken only by hints of towers, promising to the traveller shelter for the coming night, which with gathering gloom spreads a soft mysterious indistinctness far and near, and throws the foliage into solemn masses. But there is still light enough to warm with colour the old gables of a farmhouse; light enough to show a shepherd leading home his flock, as he plays his pipe; light enough to bathe the figures of the foreground in a golden radiance.<sup>2</sup>

The Treviso *Entombment*, and certainly the *Resurrection*, belonging to Mr. Cholmondely (exhibited at Burlington House in 1879), we are quite willing to surrender, but are not so ready to abandon the great scene of the *Tempest* in the Venice Academy—so far at least as what is admitted to be "the best preserved bit in the distance to the left." This certainly does not partake of the "animated but inky" character of the rest. There, under the stormy cloud, is

<sup>1</sup> My notes fail me here, and I rely upon Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle's description.

<sup>2</sup> Yet it is these figures, somewhat coarse in drawing—"plump, seductive, but un-aristocratic in shape"—that cause Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle to suggest that here, instead of Giorgione, we have some imitator of Del Piombo. To such an imitator I would not willingly surrender such a landscape.

a lustrous glimpse of seaside landscape. A campanile, with its attendant building at the foot of blue shapes of mountains, is revealed in twilight glow; broad bands of glowing clouds are divided by intensely dark streaks of sky; everything is put in with large simplicity. We cannot but think that here we have a trace of Giorgione's genius. For what, upon the whole, was its note of power? Surely, notwithstanding the assertion that "his strength lay in resolute action and fanciful movement," there was at least in landscape, as a predominant characteristic, a large and grand simplicity? One more instance of this may be quoted from the portrait of a lady in the gallery of the Capitol at Rome, where, through a window, it is but a glimpse, is a scene of perfect restful calm; a simple lofty building and two or three thin tall trees, stand dark and still in twilight on a lonely shore. This simplicity, with deep colour and a very naturalistic tendency applied to the landscape familiar to him, gives us not indeed the greatest scenes, but those of a pleasant picturesqueness, when nature is in a noble mood.

The drawings of Giorgione—and drawings have not been tampered with like pictures—devoid of colour though they be, and even of light and shade, show this simplicity and this naturalness, this feeling for the picturesque. Take one as a specimen—that belonging to Christchurch, Oxford, lent in 1879 to the Grosvenor Gallery. A pale peak lies back against a dark sky, its long lines of ravine and descending watercourses indicated with perfect truth. Below are clustering foliage, and old houses pushing into the lake, quite a modern perception of the elements of landscape beauty.

It is grievous that such a genius ran so short a course! Yet his influence was immense and lasting, though by no means all for good. Imitators, as we have observed, exaggerated his defects; and when we find so much of hot heavy foreground, and of dark-edged masses of brown foliage in the landscape-art of many succeeding generations, we fear we must lay the blame upon the gorgeous Giorgione, who led the way with superb success at first upon the dangerous road of startling effects. In this sense, also, we must consider Giorgione as an epoch-making man.

Yet the greater man of the epoch is still to come, but before introducing Titian we will speak of one closely connected both with him and with Giorgione—PALMA VECCHIO (born near Bergamo 1480, died 1528). This accomplished painter is always satisfactory, often

captivating, but with a vein of the superficial which puts him a step lower than his great comrades. His deficiencies are indicated in such statements as these—"There is perhaps no painter who dazzles more by his light than Palma"; and again, "He painted smiling landscapes at the period of their brightest verdure."<sup>1</sup> If so, pathos, which gives to landscape its highest poetical quality, must needs be absent. But though this sparkling brilliance certainly distinguishes his flesh tones and draperies, it is not, we think, the characteristic of his landscapes. To paint landscapes at the period of their brightest verdure is exactly what an early Fleming would do, but we should hardly charge Palma with such a solecism in Venetian art. On the contrary, our notes indicate that though, as Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle assert, his general style may have been more influenced by that of the earlier men, Carpaccio, Cima, and Bellini, in landscape he followed rather the example of Giorgione and Titian.

Palma, like Giorgione, painted the *Conversation* piece, but it is "holy personages" who occupy the scene. The great picture at Naples (No. 28 of the large room) is one of his best specimens of this kind, and here, certainly, the description given of the landscape by the above-named authors supports their view: "The Virgin has taken her seat on a knoll within easy distance of a farm in an undulating country, the weather is fair and warm, and the sun plays upon the clouds and hills and bushes." "It is a noble composition, sparkling with light in the dresses and landscape." We must confess that our impression is different, and our record is that of a low-toned evening scene, everything suffused with twilight and lost in gloaming, long bands of cloud above, and one purple peak emerging below. The whole conveys the impression of great quietude, and is so far quite Titianesque, while the foliage, hard and flaky, reminds us rather of Giorgione.

Let us see how far other landscapes of Palma's agree with this in character. At the Belvedere at Vienna, *The Meeting of Elizabeth and Mary*, there is, as our authors admit, "a rich toned landscape," and, we may add, long lines of hill and sweeping cloud masses. At Dresden, in 245, *The Madonna and St. Catherine*, there are evening clouds given with vigour. In 242 (*Infant Christ on the Virgin's lap*) there is a low light catching upon gable and tower, a blue hill, and an orange-tinted evening cloud; and in 243, *The Sisters* (or *Graces*), a landscape with ridge behind ridge, and soft long-lying

<sup>1</sup> See *History of Painting in North Italy*, ii. 458.



clouds; but in this last there is a more delicate gray light than usual, and something which reminds one of Cima. The same may be said of the fine daylight landscape in the *Sacred Conversation* (No. 335) at the Glasgow Corporation Gallery, which is painted in bright fresh pearly tints, and with the large free touch which is Palma's own. But No. 145, called a Giorgione, but assigned by Mr. Robinson without doubt to Palma, and claimed as "a splendid specimen," shows a landscape with a broad and solemn red-light illuminating masses of cloud stratus, and buildings among trees, full of fine glooms and soft shadows.

Upon the whole, then, we should credit Palma with a taste in landscape very much like his position in art, midway between that of the earlier, brighter men, the Cimas and Carpaccios, and that of their richer-natured, deeper-thoughted successors, Giorgione and Titian. He is large and vigorous, and has every technical excellence. He puts in certain broad effects with skill, but there is a want alike of delicate observation and of depth of feeling; if we may so express it, he caught the "go" of the day, and cleverly adapted it. Such an one cannot take his place among the greatest; Giorgione, Titian, and Tintoretto stand apart.

Of the great ones there is indeed yet another—PORDENONE (1483-1538), but his fame rests upon grand figure-frescos, in which landscape may sometimes appear, but not, so far as known to the writer, noticeable either in amount or character. His great works, too, are scattered among rarely-visited towns and palaces in Friuli and the Trevisana, and are fast decaying, the landscape portions suffering first. In Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle's elaborate account of him, mention is made of an early work at Colalto, near Conegliano—a *Flight into Egypt*, in which "great care is lavished on the rich detail of landscape," as well as "on delicate minutiae of children and birds and trophies"; this is not suggestive of anything higher than detail. It is observable, however, that landscape appears in the first fresco painted after he became acquainted with what was doing at Venice. This was when he was thirty years old, the fresco is also at Colalto (*The Dumbness of Zacharias*); it is not, however, described.

But it is in panel-painting that we should especially look for landscape; an example is in the Duomo at Pordenone—a *St. Joseph and Infant Christ*, in which, we are told, "the distance is a



landscape, with blue cones of hills and large bluffs, varied with farm-buildings and flocks; through depressions of the ground a mountain-torrent runs." Here again is no hint of landscape feeling, only a record of landscape feature. Panels attributed to Pordenone in Florence and Rome, in which there is landscape of a noble cast, such as one would like to attribute to Pordenone, are in each instance assigned to others by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle. We are sorry that so fine a painter must be dismissed from the field of landscape.

#### NOTE UPON CIMA.

In my account of the Berlin landscape (No. 7) I have spoken of Conegliano and its castle "towering into the sky." The description in the Catalogue, however, mentions only the neighbouring Castle of Colalto. In the National Gallery picture, No. 300, what I take to be this Castle of Colalto rises very picturesquely against distant mountains on the left, while to the right appear the towers of Conegliano.

A *St. Jerome* from the Hamilton collection in the National Gallery is now attributed to Cima. It is rich, even brilliant, in its colouring, and if there is a touch of oddity in the house perched upon a crag, there is loveliness in the mountain range, and in the amber and lemon tints that streak the evening sky. I feel as if I had hardly done justice in the text to the landscape of this charming painter.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### LANDSCAPE OF THE VENETIAN SCHOOL IN CULMINATION AND DECLINE.

Titian . . . . .	1477-1576.	Paris Bordone . . . . .	1500-1570.
Savoldo . . . . .	1480-	Bassano . . . . .	1510-1572.
Lorenzo Lotto . . . . .	1480?-1555?	Schiavone . . . . .	1522?-1582?
Bonifazio . . . . .	1491?-1540.	Veronese . . . . .	1500-1588.
Tintoretto . . . . .		1512-1594.	

TITIAN !—"There is a strange undercurrent of everlasting murmur about his name, which means the deep consent of all great men that he is greater than they." So at one time wrote Mr. Ruskin, and we venture to think that it remains true, though Mr. Ruskin has written somewhat differently since. There is a calm and a balance about Titian's greatness which justifies that fine passage, though it may well be admitted that in the course of his long life, as he illustrated the culmination, so also he exemplified the decline which presaged the fall of "great art."

Titian has been repeatedly called "the founder of landscape-art." One writer terms him "the Homer of landscape"; Sir Charles Eastlake writes, "Titian painted the grandest landscapes the world has seen." Yet he rarely painted landscape for its own sake. Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle can enumerate but four<sup>1</sup> true landscape subjects, of which three are lost, the remaining one being in the possession of the Queen at Buckingham Palace. Nevertheless landscape sometimes takes a large place on his canvas, almost to the subordination of the figures; but the choicest specimens occupy

<sup>1</sup> (1.) A landscape sent in 1552 to Madrid for Philip of Spain. (2.) A landscape with soldiers and animals in the collection of Paolo del Sera. (3.) A landscape shown by Titian in his house to Aurelio Luini. (4.) An upright belonging to the Queen at Buckingham Palace. The fine landscape, *St. John Preaching in the Wilderness*, at Chatsworths is attributed by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle to A. Schiavone, though Waagen is of a different opinion.

corners, or are glimpses through windows, conveniently filling up vacant spaces in figure subjects. In his drawings the case is different; in these he was free from the fancies of patrons and the conditions of ecclesiastical art; and from the large number of landscapes among them we may argue a prevailing bent of mind. But in all these points he is like others of his contemporaries; in what, then, is he distinguished from them? We may perhaps express it in the fewest words when we say that he, beyond any of his predecessors, understood how to deal largely and suggestively with landscape detail, and that he, more than others, entered into the thoughts and moods of nature, as expressed in her noblest scenes and objects. The charm of morning among blue hills had indeed been felt by Cima, Basaiti, and perhaps some others; and the sweetness of a calm resplendent twilight had found many admirers, as Perugino, Bartolommeo, Bellini, and Giorgione witness. But Titian took a wider sweep, and in changeful light and shade over the level champaign, in noble mountain form, in clouds, in trees and forests, in the wide sea, he found a poetry, a pathos, a sentiment, that others had only occasionally discovered.

Observing "the modesty of nature" he moderated the fire of Giorgione, and is never impulsive or crude; while, like Giorgione, he treats everything largely, broadly, and with depth of colour. Like him, too, he dwells upon all that is picturesque in ordinary scenery; but he goes farther afield than Barbarelli; and, as in his boyhood he had come from mountain fastnesses, that lay outside the experience of him who haunted only the shades of Castelfranco, so in his manhood he returned to them, and sought his inspiration where the eagle spreads his pinions, and clouds mingle with the mountain summits, and forests darken in the storm.

Titian was born in 1477, or perhaps a little later, at Pieve di Cadore, a small mountain-town some hundred miles north of Venice, at one time the chief place of an independent community, but which had given itself not long before to the Great Republic. At nine or ten years of age he came to Venice, studied under the Bellini, and imitated Giorgione, whose social position, no less than his fiery genius, would naturally captivate the young provincial; but, gradually drawing ahead of all competitors, he ranked at last with Bellini himself, thenceforward still advancing, till in his achievements and his fame he overshadowed all save Michael Angelo and Raphael, dying, not far from a century old, in 1576.

In estimating the range and character of Titian's landscape it will be convenient to follow him on his yearly journey from Venice to Cadore, for, wealthy and noble as he became, he never forgot that he was "a man of Cadore." On this journey we shall meet in turn with all the elements of his scenery.

At Venice there is the sea; not the sea in its boundlessness, majesty, and power; not the sea of the storm-wind, of rocks and breakers; not the sea of Holland; but the sea of the salt lagoon, with its level lines, and calm tints, and distant campaniles. It is so that Titian painted it, on the not very frequent occasions when he chose to introduce it. One of the instances to be noticed is in the fresco of *St. Christopher*, where Venice is plainly seen in the distance, rising out of the shallow waters that are scarcely mid-leg deep for the giant. Here, therefore, is a variation from the ordinary manner of dealing with the subject, due to the spectacle of the lagoons, though he has avoided verisimilitude by placing a mountain of rocky form over against the city. Equally interesting is his introduction, in a fresco at Padua, of the Euganean hills, as seen from Venice, across the watery waste. (Fig. 114.) Again there is the view in one of his drawings of which Mr. Ruskin has availed himself to point a mountain moral, for on the horizon is seen the Antelao which overhangs Cadore, nearer are the buildings of Murano, and nearer still some felucca-rigged boats working out to sea. (*Modern Painters*, iv. 224.)

But the sunny calm of the fair shores that Titian loved, is perhaps better given in that most perfect of his works, the *Sacred and Profane Love*, at Rome, where peaceful cloud and sea lie face to face afar in the coolness of the dawn. (Fig. 115.) Or there is the delightful *Three Ages* of the Bridgewater Gallery, with its blue expanse of plain, and glory of broad waters in the distance, its mountain shapes sinking on the horizon, and graceful woodland near at hand. There is no such vista of a lake in Titian as the Flemings and Perugino loved; but the Cadore country has no lakes, although two small ones are passed on the way thither; and, if he studied from a lake at all, it is more likely to have been the Lake of Garda, of which we fancy there is a reminiscence in the background of the *Ariadne* at the National Gallery. And it is possible that he may have resorted to the same scene of beauty for the lake, intended to be that of Galilee, between the two majestic figures of St. Peter and St. Andrew in his great picture at Serravalle.

FIG. 114.—FROM A FRESCO BY TITIAN IN THE SCUOLA DEL SANTO, PADUA.

In this last, though the scene is all in half-light, the hills, some wooded, some bare and broken, that lapse in turn to the distant shore, are admirably true. Two boats under sail scud along, raising white foam at their bows, and in the boats and figures on the hither strand appears a curious modification of Raphael's *Miraculous*

FIG. 115.—LANDSCAPE IN THE SACRED AND PROFANE LOVE: TITIAN.

*Draught*, the principal change being that the Saviour stands instead of sits; anyway, the one great painter clearly wished to pay a compliment to the other (Fig. 116).

But, if sea or lake is not so common as might have been expected in Titian, the plain—the dark, rich, level plain—that might almost be mistaken for sea, is a frequent feature with him. We have already noticed it in the *Three Ages*; it is seen in the *Noli me tangere* of the National Gallery; and again in the portrait of the

Duchess of Urbino at the Uffizi (Fig. 117), where the vast expanse, though only a view through a window, is glorious in its calm and simplicity. The long lines of cloud and hill, and the single campanile rising in the midst catching a last gleam, are all in accord. Now it was the plain that, whenever he left Venice, he must needs pass over, whether bound for Padua, Treviso, or Cadore; and it is on the latter route, especially where the slopes of the hills afford a backward view, that the vastness of the plain becomes

FIG. 116.—LANDSCAPE OF THE MADONNA IN GLORY, SERRAVALLE: TITIAN.

impressive. At Manza, near Ceneda, he had a villa on a hillside, whence the prospect is truly sea-like in its blue immensity; and we may remark how perfectly Titian, whether or not acquainted with Leonardo's dictum concerning the "perspective of disappearance," which requires objects to be less finished in proportion as they are remote, acted upon that principle.<sup>1</sup> At Serravalle, where his daughter lived, and where in the Duomo hangs the noble picture just referred to, he would, like everybody else, climb the steps to the sanctuary on the rocky height above, and see once more the campanile of St. Mark, thirty miles away, like the mast of a ship at anchor. At such

<sup>1</sup> Chapter x. p. 216.

times we may be sure he felt all the poetry of dim illimitable distance.

And the forest was also a familiar scene to Titian. He had no such dread of it as the poets seem to have felt. Did not his country-folk make money in plenty out of forests? Was not his brother Francesco a wealthy timber merchant? Here, moreover, not far from Serravalle, began the ascent, steep enough, to the great Bosco del Gran Consiglio, which, covering an immense plateau, and fringing precipices at a great height for many miles on his farther way to Cadore, would needs be well known to him. It was Government property, supplying the navy yards of the Republic; and a "palazzo" stood in the midst for the use of officials. When Titian wanted forest scenery, there it was at hand; and we may perhaps say, though such statements are always liable to exception, that he was the first that went to the forest for the purposes of art. He was certainly great in trees, and must have taken much note somewhere, of the huge boles and trunks in stately company that stretched their branches and massive umbrage against the saffron sky of evening.

FIG. 117.—FROM TITIAN'S PORTRAIT OF THE  
DUCHESS OF URBINO, UFFIZI.

"For three hundred years," says Mr. Ruskin, "no men but Titian and Turner ever drew the stem of a tree." But he excelled also in grouping the stems. His pen sketch for the company of the apostles in the *Assumption of the Virgin* is quite suggestive of the way in which he threw together, and interlaced aloft, his



large-armed trees, never forgetting those glints of light among them that charm the forest wanderer. In the *St. Jerome* of the Brera (Fig. 118), where the steep slant of the wooded hill is exactly that which rises behind his house at Cadore; or again in the woodcut of *St. Francis Receiving the Stigmata*; and superbly in the *Peter Martyr*, we have this grand or vigorous grouping. In the latter picture the trees take magnificent possession of the scene, and seem to writhe and quiver as, down among their roots, on the mossy banks and trampled herbage, the deed is done, while the shriek of the flying friar, his horror-stricken figure dark against the lurid twilight, pierces the forest depths.<sup>1</sup>

This is an instance of the way in which Titian made use of the expressiveness of nature to aid the human story. In a murder scene of one of his drawings, where an old man is attacked by two brigands in open country, the trees above are wrestling with a storm-wind, the sun is setting among wild hills, and a wild sky is pouring torrents of rain upon a distant town, whelmed in the sudden darkness of the tempest. Whether he adapted the scene to the figures or the figures to the scene does not matter. Or, for another example, we may look at his early work in the Scuola del Santo at Padua, where a wife is stabbed to death in a lonely spot. The fresco, indeed, is too much perished to be fairly judged, but at Parma is a sketch for it, attributed to Titian, in which the shapeless mound of earth (objected to by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle) shows picturesque detail, and makes, in combination with sullen gleams of cloud and slender tree-stems that stretch across, a fit setting for the thrilling spectacle (Fig. 119). That the trees here are young and slender is curious, marking, possibly, a survival of the mediæval type in Titian's art. Mr. Ruskin has noticed this, and given an example from another of these frescos, but adds that the trees under Titian's hand "grow wild and free, the sky has lost its peace, and is writhed into folds of motion impendent upon earth, and somewhat threatening through its solemn light" (*Modern Painters*, iii. 323). It was not till Titian wielded his full power that his trees, as we have seen, were not only "wild and free," but mighty in stature and in girth, taking the sky by storm.

Yet he never forgot the grace of the open woodland, and in the *St. John in the Wilderness*, now at the Venice Academy (Fig. 120),

<sup>1</sup> Once, perhaps only once, he gives the effect of moonlight among trees. It occurs in a *St. Jerome* at the Louvre (447).

**FIG. 118.—THE ST. JEROME OF TITIAN, FROM AN ENGRAVING.**

painted when he was nearly eighty years of age, the scattered trees upon a bank, tall and slim, wave in a gentle air that answers to a bright rush of water beneath, and make a charming scene of

FIG. 119.—FROM TITIAN'S SKETCH FOR HIS FRESCO AT PADUA.

picturesque solitude. It is, however, in his drawings that we are most struck with Titian's abounding love for trees; they cluster upon every knoll, they root among the rocks and impend over crags, they overshadow rushing streams and winding footpaths, they embower

farms and ruins, and in the receding landscape gather in rich soft masses upon every hillside. There are trees in every combination, and always, so far as can be judged, the more freely and vigorously touched as he advanced in years.

At Serravalle Titian entered the gates of the hills, from hour to hour penetrating their stern recesses, and we are reminded in them of those rocky foregrounds which appear so frequently, especially in his drawings, and for the sake of which he probably chose so often the subject of St. Jerome and his cave. The great boulders worn and mossed, or thatched with grass, and the hollowed and nodding cliffs matted with herbage and draped with pendant foliage, tell of constant and careful study. Yet with all the indications of painstaking observation there is associated a large and free treatment which shows how far Mantegna had been left behind, and how well Titian understood where to insist upon, and where only to suggest, the details of scenery. In these scenes of rocky wildness it is impossible not

FIG. 120.—FROM TITIAN'S ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS.

to see that Titian led the way for Salvator in appreciating the romantic aspect of nature.

But the track through these Serravalle hills, after surmounting the stony ridge between the small Lago Morto and the larger Lago Possino, opens upon rich and gracious scenes which increase in sweep

and beauty as the traveller descends into the noble Val di Mel, with Belluno stately in its midst. Here Titian had many friends; amongst them was the Piloni family, and at their palazzo, near Trichiana, a few miles down the valley, he used, it is said, to amuse himself with the favourite Cadore pastime of snaring birds, for which an oak copse, hard by, afforded the opportunity.

There is more of his landscape—certainly that of his drawings—to be found in this neighbourhood than perhaps in any other. Here are his farmhouses with high pitched roof, a peculiarity which Sir Charles Eastlake, for want of an intimate acquaintance with Titian's country, attributed to an imitation of his reputed German instructors in landscape. Here are to be seen—in the Piave, the Ardo, and Cordevole—the rivers that pour their swirling waters through almost all his country scenes. Here are the bridges, mills and “osterias,” the sheds, the smithies, the shepherd incidents, and incidents of the road, as packmen, peasants, horsemen, and monks pursue their way. Here are the bosky hills, and bluffs, and wood-lets he is so fond of. Here, as the eye follows the wide valley, may many a day be seen the sweeping storms of rain, constantly occurring in his drawings and sometimes in his pictures, as with striking truth in the portion of the landscape at Buckingham Palace, see Frontispiece (Fig. 121), which we may almost identify as a view taken from the Palazzo Piloni looking across the wide valley, and showing one of the peaks on the opposite side inky dark from the approaching storm that has blotted out the rest. In this Val di Mel too, offering as it does so large a vista, there is constant opportunity for observing those wandering gleams that, breaking through the clouds, light up tower and tree, and flit over far hillsides. Titian availed himself much of these breaks in cloud, and the *Madonna and Child with St. Catherine*, in the National Gallery, affords an appropriate instance, since the view is pretty certainly taken from the banks of the Ardo a mile or two above Belluno, looking westward, and not far from the mill of Colontola, which tradition, supported by one of his drawings, asserts to have been sketched by him. If, too, the landscape of the *Diana and Actæon* of the Bridgewater Gallery, painted when he was eighty-two, be examined with a glass it will give evidence of his still continued yearly visit to this lovely region. The scenery consists of the richest broken woodland and purple mountain, quite of the Belluno character; the mountains are lost in misty clouds, and transient gleams career over hill and wood. No less frequent in

this region, too, though undoubtedly common in other prospects with which Titian was familiar, are those distant wreaths of smoke which he seldom omitted in any extensive scene. Its movement and convolutions were an element of life and of poetic suggestion also. Already we have noticed it in Bartolommeo, associated with the calm of the evening hearth; with Titian in its greater volume it quite as often indicated the sudden terror of conflagration.

But, above all, in this Belluno country are to be seen, and first seen in their characteristic peculiarities, the hills,—the endless hills of Titian. For miles and miles, down as far as Feltre, they stretch along the northern side of the Val di Mel, and in every variety of combination. Shoulder behind shoulder, peak behind peak, they peer, now restful in their massive lines, now restless and defiant. Heaving and tossing, they fade into the far distance; Titian could find in them forms to suit every exigence of his fertile fancy, and all the more that among them, not very prominent, but occurring here and there with apparitional suddenness, uprise the dolomites. These last are *par excellence* Titian's mountains. "No one else dwelt upon them so persistently; from no one else have we such a series of studies determined, apparently, by their presence. He must have loved the vigour they imparted to composition, the audacity of their lines, the picturesqueness with which they vandyked the sky, or wrestled with the clouds, and their sharp clear drawing. He loved them most of all, perhaps, because they were shapes of grandeur printed upon his boyish mind among his native fields; because from year to year they greeted his return to dear familiar scenes."<sup>1</sup>

To these, to Cadore itself, we must now betake ourselves. It is a long ascent up the gorge of the Piave, succeeded by a stiff climb over alpine pastures, and through pine forest, before the castle crag appears in sight. Titian put its familiar shape into numerous scenes, the most noted instance being his adaptation of it to the background of Bellini's *Orgy of the Gods*, now at Alnwick.

His treatment (Fig. 122) illustrates that perception of the romantic in scenery which is one of the notes of Titian. A flame-like cloud rises from behind the lofty rock, which, with its castle turrets, is one brown gloom, save for a gleam of westering light that tips the battlements. Dark masses of foliage cluster upon the slopes, but one slender tree soars out of the deepening shade,

<sup>1</sup> *Cadore*, or Titian's Country, p. 76.

and throws a few graceful branches across the illumined cloud.<sup>1</sup> This is a castle with all the modern mystery and romance about it, singular at a time when castles were as much in everyday use as gaols are now with us. Some bareness from modern cultivation, and ugly barrack-like houses that have replaced burnt villages, now disappoint the traveller on this southern side, but mounting to

FIG. 122.—CASTLE OF CADORE, IN THE PICTURE AT ALNWICK.

the ridge that carries the small town, or, better still, climbing to the castle ruin, either at early morning or as the sun sinks to the west, the romantic landscape that surrounded Titian in his native place is at last disclosed.

Three great mountain vistas there fill the eye—southward down

<sup>1</sup> Fir trees probably did not grow on the rock in Titian's time, but whether or no, he always avoided the spiky monotonous rigidity of the fir forest, as he also avoided the cold white snows. Neither his hand nor his eye could accept these as suitable to art.

the gorge of the Piave, westward along its tributary the Boita, northward along the broad valley by which the Piave has found its way after escaping from the recesses of the Carnic Alps. On every side the mountain masses rise stark and pale from unseen depths, or clothed in purple gloom. The majesty of these great objects must needs take possession of a mind like Titian's. His childhood was passed at the foot of this castle-hill, his patrimony lay there, he would be familiar with every detail of the mountain panorama, and with every shift and flux of light and shade on peak and precipice. He was prepared, therefore, as was no other of his great contemporaries for dealing with the mountain world; and bringing to it the perfection of his art we find in his delineation a dignity, a power, a freedom, entirely beyond the reach of the Flemings, and excelling in these respects both Da Vinci and Dürer.

It was at Cadore that the companionship of cloud and mountain, which he was the first to dwell upon as a subject for art, would be constantly before him. Think of the round white bags scattered athwart the sky that served others for clouds so long, or of the sweet but endlessly repeated bands of cirro-stratus of more poetical observers, and then turn to the powerful storm-clouds of Titian that roll with might about the mountain-tops, and are heaped up into the sky! But that Masaccio once, and Bellini once or twice, had hinted at such a conjunction, it would seem as if between Lucretius and Titian no observant eye had witnessed that magnificence. Titian knew well, not only that mountains are among the grandest symbols that nature offers of power, mystery, duration, and majesty, but also how much is gained by their fellowship with clouds. To him they were "two great landscape powers, and he composed mountain and cloud together, each answering to each, like the parts of a chorus."

Well, therefore, may it be said that Titian stands at the head of landscape-art. He took a far wider range than had been taken before; he saw, more than any one before, the varied power and expressiveness of scenery, and he treated it all with a rare grandeur, nay, solemnity of feeling. He is never led into the fantastic; he never wearies with a confusion of startling effects, such as we find in Altdorfer, or occasionally, with all his genius, in Tintoret. His feeling for deep harmonious colour and for breadth of chiaroscuro (greatly indebted in both respects to Giorgione) is shown as much in his landscape as in his figure subjects, and there is as much of dignity, whatever the scale, in his hints of scenery as in the



portraits of princes, senators, or soldiers, with which they are so often associated.

Let us close our remarks upon this great creator of landscape with two instances of this association, in which he availed himself of the sympathy between nature and man. In one, the emperor Charles V. rides to the battlefield of Mühlberg. On a dark steed he canters out of the forest, an emaciated figure of fate, his armour sending forth lurid flashes. Dimly visible before him are the waters of the Elbe, and beyond the river which he is about to ford rise hills from which the mists are rolling upward. A sky of gloom and cloud impends. The day of the Kaiser's vengeance has come!

In the other portrait the same potentate, near the end of his troubled life, sits in a corner soured and silent, and over a low wall is seen a pale troubled landscape, illuminated with watery gleams. Retouched though this has been, we cannot but think that the spirit of the great painter's intention has been preserved. The first of these portraits is at Madrid, the second at Munich.

Before we come to the greatest of Titian's great contemporaries there are some to be spoken of whose landscape is specially noticeable. The earliest and most remarkable of these is GIAN. GIROLAMO SAVOLDO, a man whose personality has been singularly lost sight of, whose history is unknown or uncertain, whose works have been constantly attributed to others, and yet whose individuality as a painter is most distinct. It is said that he considered himself, and was considered by others, an amateur, which may partly explain these singularities, but his works appear to have been numerous, and he lived to a great age. Though born at Brescia in 1480, he dwelt at Venice, and belongs therefore to the great time of Venetian art.

Savoldo's favourite theme in landscape was neither the morning freshness of Cima, the "mighty daylight of Titian," nor the rich evening lights that Titian and so many others loved. Savoldo preferred absolute twilight, and though to be a proficient in but one aspect of nature does not indicate a large genius, still to have sympathised especially with this particular phase shows refinement of perception.

The *Mary approaching the Sepulchre* (National Gallery) at once reveals a painter of great originality. It is wonderfully modern in conception and treatment; one might almost have assigned it to the French romantic school—indeed a romantic element, perhaps more marked than in any of his day, excepting Tintoret, pervades most

of Savoldo's works. In the Magdalen seeking the sacred tomb, we have a furtive, stooping, shrouded figure, more than half in shadow, and with that air of mystery Savoldo loved to throw around his subjects. This feeling is thoroughly carried out in the landscape, which, however out of place in such a subject, gives with exquisite truth a very early dawn upon the Giudecca. A dim church and campanile stand upon the hither shore; the farther lies in darkness under a heavy bank of cloud, which hides all token of the approaching day, save that one white wreath above has caught the pale reflection; dark shapes of boats and buildings edge the faintly glimmering water; one red spark shines from some lantern or shrine lamp.

FIG. 123.—PESARO, FROM SIR A. H. LAYARD'S  
ST. JEROME: SAVOLDO.

In the Brera at Milan, the *Glorification of the Virgin*, painted for S. Domenico at Pesaro, is a picture of another type. Here four saints of colossal size remind us of the two by Titian in the similar subject at Serravalle, especially as, in like manner, there is seen between the giant pairs a distant landscape, where the town and harbour of Pesaro, with a mountain beyond, lie suffused in a golden mist worthy also of the greater master. The same scene, with a lovely evening effect,

is represented in a *St. Jerome* belonging to Sir Austen Henry Layard, who has kindly furnished the drawing from which Fig. 123 has been engraved. It bears all the marks of Savoldo's peculiar genius. In the Pitti a *Nativity* by Savoldo is actually, and not without reason, ascribed to Titian. In the Turin Gallery is an *Adoration of the Shepherds*, with, we are told, a "beautiful effect of dusk after sunset in a mountain landscape,"<sup>1</sup> or, as another authority describes it, "a wild and solemn landscape."<sup>2</sup> In the first of

FIG. 124.—FROM AN ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS:  
SAVOLDO, TURIN.

these descriptions we would only demur to the "dusk after sunset," since we should rather call it a fine but early dawn, from which the dark clouds—symbolic of error, ignorance, and sin—are rolling away. The star breaks from these clouds where they are thinner, and the light of coming day tinges the edges of the rocky hill and the tops of some humble gables at its foot (Fig. 124). In the *Transfiguration* at the Uffizi (645) there is evidence of an original imagination, not only in the striking figures of the glorified saints but in the hazy horizon and the dark mountain, which hides in

<sup>1</sup> Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *History of Painting in Northern Italy*, ii. p. 427.

<sup>2</sup> The National Gallery old Catalogue, p. 321.

its gloom the three apostles.<sup>1</sup> In the Liechtenstein Gallery at Vienna the background of a portrait (No. 21) shows a characteristic pale twilight sea, with a castle catching a faint light. More than once Savoldo shows his liking for the dim vastness of the sea.

At Berlin in a *Pietà* (307 A) there is a striking sunset hid behind a bank, but illuminating a distant sea-horizon, with a fine gleam thrown also faintly upon cliffs, and finally touching buildings upon a crag over the sea.

Giorgione, Titian, and Sebastian del Piombo are the three painters to whom works by Savoldo are often attributed, and Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle believe that a picture assigned to the first of these at Longniddry, near Edinburgh, the seat of the Earl of Wemyss, and showing "a charming clouded landscape," is by Savoldo. He frequently painted "night effects," another sign of the modern feeling in landscape. Not a picture that can be traced to him but betrays some originality.

LORENZO LOTTO (from about 1480 to 1555? both dates conjectural) is a painter who reflects, not without brilliance, much of the artistic splendour of his day; but, like Palma, it is more reflected than original light by which he shines. In his earlier works we have the Carpaccio and Cima influence, then that of Palma; later, the clear radiance of Correggio; and later still, the dignity of Titian, with whom Lotto in his old age lived on terms of mutual respect and friendship. Like Palma, he was a Bergamasque by birth, but, unlike him, after completing his education among the scholars of Bellini at Venice, he returned to Bergamo and lived there several years. Thus he possessed that familiar knowledge of mountain and plain which distinguishes most of the so-called Venetian painters—Venetian, not from birth or even residence in the island city, but from their belonging to Venetian territory, as was the case at that time with Bergamo.

Lotto frequently associates landscape with his subjects, and in these a characteristic feature is a great expanse of plain like that which would be constantly before the eyes of an inhabitant of the hills of Bergamo as he looked southward over Lombardy. Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle say of Lotto's *St. Jerome* in the Louvre that "it is more of a landscape picture than Basaiti's versions of the

<sup>1</sup> Kugler's *Handbook* speaks of a picture by Savoldo, of this subject, in the Ambrogian Library, having "a peculiar lighting, which gives a certain charm of mystery." Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, however, say that this is "a large but inferior replica" of the *Transfiguration* in the Uffizi.

same subject, and the ravine-glade in which the saint reclines and beats his breast is cleverly presented." The masses of rock which form this ravine, though a little unreal, are indeed rendered with fine and solemn tone; but more, we think, to be admired is the mysterious outlook towards a level blue-gray distance, shown with striking effect between two tree-stems of the foreground. In the portrait of a proto-notary at the National Gallery is seen through a window a vast distance of dark-blue plain, beyond a foreground of bare down and wood; and beyond the plain again, in vanishing perspective, a range of faintly shown, it may be, snow-mountains, glimmering through haze and cloud. In a group of portraits—his own family, it is said—at the same gallery there is a fine sweep of distant coast and sea. One of the hills seems to smoke like a volcano, but, if so, one should think it was painted from description, not from personal knowledge. An *Entombment*, attributed to Lotto at Sta. Maria dell' Orto, Venice, though there is no distance, has a wild piece of sympathetic landscape, with old walls and misty clouds. At Vienna his *Madonna with St. Catherine and St. James* has a delicious, Correggio-bright landscape—bright as with the freshness of morning over a great array of rolling hills.

Among pictures by Lotto which illustrate his love for landscape is one at the secluded little town of Asolo, pinnacled itself above an immensity of plain.<sup>1</sup> This picture is described as "a simple and impressive composition of three figures in a hilly landscape." Another, a vast panel at Alzano, near to Bergamo, exhibits the death of Peter Martyr, and, we are told, is even "more manly and impressive than Titian's noted picture." "Behind the martyr is the grove where woodsmen fell the trees and herdsman tend their flocks; to the left is a range of hills crested with towers and houses." The "treatment, tone, and lines of the landscape are," it is added, "Palmesque." Bergamo and its neighbourhood possess numerous works by Lotto. Of one of them, a *Marriage of St. Catherine*, Ridolfi tells the curious story that the landscape, seen through a window and containing a view of Mount Sinai, was cut out by a French soldier during the Venetian wars, and that a piece of dark-coloured canvas marks the place of the theft!

With hardly an exception, so far as we know, Lotto dwelt upon the charm of distance, and, as he spent his last years at the sanctuary of Loreto, we may believe that to the call of devotion was added the attraction of a great horizon.

<sup>1</sup> See view from Asolo, p. 62.

BONIFAZIO (VENEZIANO), died 1540, is a painter, not indeed of genius, but of excellent capacity, whose pictures always reach a high standard of skill, so much so that it has been quite possible to attribute some of his best either to Giorgione or to Titian. One always finds rich and finely-toned colour in his landscape, and much grace of design and touch, especially in his trees. In the picture at the Venice Academy by which he is most known, the *Rich Man in the Parable* (No. 500), there are some charming bits of landscape sug-

FIG. 125.—FROM A PICTURE IN THE VENICE ACADEMY : BONIFAZIO.

gestive even of Gainsborough. Such are the wooded banks descending to the stream, and the calm hills beyond. Such, also, is the pleached alley which Gainsborough's self might have disposed for a group of beauties. Or shall we adopt rather the resemblance pointed out by Kugler, who speaks of the fine picture in the Brera—the *Finding of Moses*, long ascribed to Giorgione—as forestalling “the charm of Watteau's best groups”? It certainly contains a magnificent sweep of landscape, broadly dashed in; and in this respect, like the very daylight landscape of a *Holy Family* in the Corsini Palace at Rome, seems to forestall, in its expanse of open country and low bushy slopes, Rubens rather than Watteau.

Many of his landscapes, however, are of a different sort, and betray a singular repetition of idea. Of these No. 524 in the Venice Academy is a fair specimen. The long bands of evening cloud; the dark blue hill with a sunset gleam upon it; the old brown-walled town, and the tree of airy freedom in its branches, here relieved by white cloud, there lost in the purple dark of the sky—such features Bonifazio gives us again and again. (Fig. 125.) He is very picturesque, which suited his rather sketchy style, but hardly more than this; and when it is said that this last agreeable scene belongs to a *Massacre of the Innocents* it will be apparent that he has no notion of adapting his landscape either by sympathy or pathetic contrast to his subject. Mr. Ruskin, however, points out one claim to distinction in landscape-art belonging to Bonifazio, if he had, as he believes, “the honour of having first tried to represent the real effect of the sun in landscape . . . in his pictures of the *Camps of Israel* in the old library at Venice.”

PARIS BORDONE (1500–1570), although the beauty of fair women, the lustre of ornament, the sheen of shot silks, the lordly grace of architecture, formed his favourite themes, and were treated with a rare splendour of colour, yet has something also to say in landscape, as witness the “rich poetical”<sup>1</sup> background of his *Repose in Egypt* in the Bridgewater Gallery. It is a landscape with a high horizon and a cloudy sky streaked with sun-gleams, and the scene consists of one vast woodland overlooked by a single craggy hill. Bordone is all himself in the charming face of the Madonna, and he surrounds her with the deep repose of “forest on forest” that hang about her head “like cloud on cloud.”

The landscape of another picture, the *Finding of Moses*,<sup>2</sup> is effective, though coarse in execution and colour. It shows a sea or lake, long ranges of mountains, masses of dark foliage, and a red low light stretching across a sky intense in its blue depth. Harsh and strong in colour and effect is also No. 237 in the Brera, in which appears the Bassano-like incident of a purple dark hill against a last gleam.

But there is also in the Brera a *Baptism* (208), with an extensive woodland scene, a reach of the stream glittering in the far-off distance—the whole very delicately finished, but low in tone and under

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Jameson, *Private Picture Galleries*, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> Belonging to Charles Butler, Esq., and exhibited at Burlington House in 1883.

a cold light. Again, in the Siena Academy we find an *Annunciation* where, accompanying grand architecture, is a long stretch of distant landscape and a noble effect of clouds that, rolling along the mountainous horizon, catch glints of light. Bordone's favourite rosy tints would hardly prepare us for so much feeling.

JACOPO DA PONTE (1510–1572), or BASSANO, as we know him, from the romantic city of his birth, occupies a decided place in landscape. His father, Francesco, was a painter, and a *Pietà* by him in the town museum shows much landscape feeling. He himself went, as all those Cisalpine people did, to Venice for his teaching, and returned full of the solemn Titian glooms, especially as they were displayed in scenery. Bonifazio, however, appears to have been his actual teacher, and it is reported that the pupil attempted to learn more than the master was willing to teach by spying upon him through a keyhole. From Bonifazio, any way, Jacopo learnt technical skill, and there is singular evidence of an imitation which it did not require the services of a keyhole to arrive at. The constant repetition of a single mountain form by Bonifazio has been pointed out, and Bassano has the same; almost always there is the one dark hill, relieved against a single orange gleam upon the horizon. Like Savoldo, yet with a marked difference, the last of twilight is Bassano's favourite time. The difference consists in the rich and glowing colour of Bassano's moment, while Savoldo prefers the yet later hour when the glow is succeeded by a chilly pallor, or perhaps as frequently the early morning when the sky is not yet aflame. Bassano's choice, and the shades which rest upon the chief part of his scenery (the objects only edged with light), are accounted for by Lady Eastlake on the ground that his native city "is wrapped in an early twilight by the high mountains above it on the west." That is true, but the mountains are not those of Cadore, as stated, but of the huge plateau of the "Sette Comuni," plunging down there into the plain; farther away westward are the hills at the back of Vicenza, and among these latter he must have found his one purple shape of mountain. He lived, Ridolfi tells us, on that western side of the town, near the bridge over the Brenta, and that writer is himself struck with the beauty of the scenery and its effect upon the painter. "Towards the north," he says, "the eye regales itself with the prospect of the descending mountains; towards the west, enjoys the beauty of the gay prolific hills; and in another



direction the vast expanse of Campagna, filled with numerous habitations, castles, and towns."

No wonder that Bassano gave so large a place to landscape in his subjects, and to landscape of fine, though little varied, quality. He was always very local, even to the copper vessels put out for sale in the streets of the town, which suited his taste for brilliant gem-like colouring; local, too, in the incidents of peasant life he so liked to dwell upon, for the suburb across the bridge is constantly cumbered with carts and cattle, and every rustic occupation is found within a walk in that direction. Thus he may be almost ranked among the painters of "genre," since he made even sacred history subservient to scenes of ordinary life—a practice which, it has been thought, originated in a conscious weakness in figure-drawing. His powerful-looking head would not prepare us to expect this; but the odd stooping attitudes he affects, and his contrivances for hiding the feet, suggest that it may have been really the case. Let us turn now to his works.

Some vigorous specimens of his landscape are at the Uffizi. In the *Supper at Emmaus* (96) there is a rich sunset over a dark greeny-blue, rolling expanse. Again *Jesus in the House of Lazarus* (97) shows a solemn evening effect, in which two cypresses break the line of sombre shade. These trees are remarkable when we remember how completely the favourites of early art had been discarded for the rounded masses of forest foliage. Here they are brought in with a modern perception of their gloomy magnificence. In the *Supper of the Rich Man* (98), where the painter revels among the lights and shadows of kitchen utensils, there is an all but night scene, with a very fine gleam behind a distant hill, and trees stretching into the dark sky. At the Brera, in the *Supper at Emmaus*—he always liked a supper-scene, with its evening dusks—is a striking far line of plain, with one last glimmer of sunlight; such a view as just above his house, from the piazza near the castle, he would often look upon in an evening. At the Brera also is what we must note as forestalling much later and northern art, a *Winter Scene* (271); the distant snow-hills and dark sky, whereon the winter boughs are darkly defined, are admirable. In the foreground peasants are warming their feet at a fire, and bringing in faggots. This is probably one of a series of the *Seasons*, for there is a similar picture at the Borghese Gallery which forms part of a *Season* set, and in which the foreground is enlivened by the killing of a pig for winter store.

At Turin is a huge picture of a *Smithy*, with the usual *one* mountain in the distance, but the scale was too large for him; his "gems" of colour are no longer available for such a space, and the effect is flat and poor. Two other large pictures are apparently repetitions of the smaller ones just described at the Brera, and, as in the *Smithy*, show loss of power. We find him again in his proper scale at Munich, where a *St. Jerome* has a fine suggestion of distant landscape; and at the Liechtenstein Gallery, Vienna, where he is quite at home with a country household on a brown evening, the light charmingly concentrated.

But we will take leave of Bassano in his native city. It is necessary to see him here, for here we shall get a different and a higher idea of his powers. The Museum contains several of his pictures, as well as works by others of his family. And, with respect to Jacopo, one is immediately struck by the absence of the usual mountain peak against glowing twilight. In the *Adoration of the Shepherds*, the best of these works, the sky is that of a clear cloudy dawn. In the *Descent into Egypt* there is a quiet gray daylight effect, delicately toned. *St. John in the Wilderness* is remarkable for powerful composition in the roots and trunks of trees. *St. Martin dividing his Cloak* is a fine Titianesque figure, surprising for one apparently so often in straits to hide his want of drawing. These inconsistencies suggest the thought that many ordinary "Bassanos" were of that shop kind of which we know too many in Italian art, for evidence is not wanting in other galleries that daylight effects were not strange to him. In the Borghese, for instance, there is an *Adoration of the Shepherds* with a clear, cold, and still distance. And in the Uffizi, *Moses and the Burning Bush* (593) shows, along with a grand piece of dark woodland, a mountain in a rich sunlight haze. Jacopo with his sons certainly sent out a vast quantity of work, and the single mountain, with a gleam behind it, may have been an easy and popular effect, often repeated because popular, and easily done to order.

Of Bassano's four painter-sons, Francesco, the most noted, did not live at home, but took up his residence at Venice, occupying at last the identical "Casa Grande" of Titian, where he met with his death from throwing himself out of a window in an unfortunate fit of lunacy. He had several Government commissions in Venice, and painted historical scenes on the ceiling of the Hall of the Grand

Council, along with such men as Tintoret, Palma, and Veronese, where they are still to be seen ; one of them represented the battle of Cadore, which Titian had also painted. In that picture Titian refused to introduce the snow amidst which the battle was fought ; Francesco, educated by his father, is mindful of that natural incident, and his slain are scattered over snowy hills.

Leandro, though he is not honoured with a biography by Ridolfi, we should judge to have possessed higher gifts than any of his brothers. This at least would appear from his landscape in the Pitti (177), a country scene, rich in colour and tone, in which nothing can be more beautiful in its way than the distance and the foliage. Leandro is also seen to advantage among the family pictures in the Museum at Bassano. In a votive piece there is a landscape painted with freedom and sweet feeling, and much picturesqueness in the foliage. We must admit that Bassano may well be proud of its townsmen who lived so long at "the bridge foot."

The story of ANDREA SCHIAVONE (1522?—1582?) has moved the pity of all biographers. Born at Sebenico, a seaport of Dalmatia, of poor Slavonic parents who came to Venice to seek work, the genius of the lad took fire as he gazed at the works of Giorgione and Titian ; but with no other means of study he copied at first engravings from the designs of Parmigiano, then worked for picture-dealers, got employment upon the façade-painting with which every house in Venice was decorated till it was found that the salt water destroyed it, obtained commissions for painting lids and sides of banker's chests, and so at last attracted the notice of Titian and Tintoret by his fine colouring, and was put upon public works. But the great men always carried the day, and Schiavone, remaining always poor, died in miserable poverty at last.

Yet Tintoret used to say that "every painter was reprehensible who did not keep a picture of Schiavone in his house for the sake of the colour, though equally to be blamed if he did not draw better than he,"—a fault for which poor Schiavone could scarcely be blamed himself. From such a colourist in difficulty with his figures we naturally look for landscape, and are not disappointed ; there colour and poetical feeling find scope.

Four landscapes "of rich golden tones" are at Hampton Court. At the Belvedere, Vienna, is an *Adoration of the Shepherds*, where, in the midst of the night gloom, the sudden glory-light strikes

with great effect; below, a dark hill, almost indistinguishable, suggests the lonely field of shepherd watch. At the Pitti, the *Death of Abel* has a beautiful wooded landscape with fine Titianesque foliage. Rome has in the Capitol a *Holy Family* with a landscape, broad and Titianesque in the manner in which dark trees cut across the gleams of light that break through a cloudy sky. Berlin has two large landscapes, though *Pan and his Satyrs* form the "staffage" of one, and *Diana and her Nymphs* of the other. These are considered important specimens of the growing art of Italian landscape, but, as in the case of Bassano, the painter has lost his peculiar power as his canvas spreads. The *Pan* has a wild mountain scene, the *Diana* a woodland; in both is a sort of fantastic vigour, shown especially in tossing trees and writhing trunks, but the colouring is brown and dull.

At Turin Schiavone recovers himself in two good landscapes, small in size, but rich in colour, and simple in composition. The subjects are the *Judgment of Paris* and the *Sacrifice of the Greeks*. The first, with its Arcadian woodland, is the best; but in the second, the distant bay with the galleys moored in front is excellent. One cannot but be struck with the vigour and glow of these pictures of Schiavone; every touch is instinct with life. Schiavone had not lived in the time of Titian and Tintoret for nothing!

We come now to a great name, PAOLO CAGLIARI or VERONESE (1500-1588), whose landscape, what there is of it, is not great, only graceful—a landscape which, like the art of his immense canvases, is little other than decorative. Yet his vigorous and independent powers necessarily rank him among the chiefs of art, and he is one to whom size was no disadvantage, but rather an element in the splendour of his work. None could equal him in what he attempted, but his very subjects betray a certain superficiality of feeling. He delighted especially in the glories, not of nature, but of lordly life arrayed in rich robing. He revelled in the gold and pearls of attire, and the pomp of gorgeous feasts.

It is no wonder that of landscape such a man gives us little. The daylight of the sky he can indeed display to perfection, and the silvery sheen which distinguishes his painting from the golden hues of Titian, finds its happy opportunity in these open skies, but they are mostly such as can be seen over the balustrades, and between the columns of florid Palladian architecture. Garments

and gardens, palaces, and the brightness of perpetual day, contribute more than enough to the excellence of his art, which is a sort of magnificent "genre,"—a style which, as we have said, lying very near to landscape and often demanding it, is, we think, seldom congenial to a true landscapist.

But what there is of landscape in Veronese shows, as might be expected, the charm of a graceful accompaniment, and the skill of a practised hand, with occasionally something more. Several we can only call "decorative," as in the *Finding of Moses* at Dresden (restored), in which, however, there is a clever rendering of the sun's rays. In the Borghese again, his *John the Baptist* has a large decorative scene—only decorative. But in the same collection his *St. Francis preaching to the Fishes* is somewhat better; the single figure backed by the great expanse has a striking effect, but there is neither light nor air over sea or sky, and it is probably not as the painter left it. In the

FIG. 126.—LANDSCAPE IN THE STA. GIUSTINA  
BY VERONESE.

Pitti (134) the *Angels at the Tomb* has a fine effective bit of bank and foliage—effective, it will be found, is the word constantly recurring as we look at the work of Veronese. But in the Uffizi (589), the *Martyrdom of Santa Giustina*, there is as pleasant a little rural scene as need be desired,—a tilted waggon drawn by mules crosses a steep rustic bridge over a brook, tall graceful trees flutter their delicate autumn-tinted leafage against a

summer sky and downs of lovely blue. One wonders to see a waggon instead of a great man's cavalcade, and a piece of simple nature outside of palace grounds; but so it is, and this little graceful sketch redeems a world of worldliness in the splendid Veronese (Fig. 126). It reminds us that Mr. Ruskin, speaking of his picture of the *Annunciation* in the Academy at Venice, instances "the little rosebush in the glass vase on the balustrade" as illustrating "his quietest and best virtues."

Perhaps the trees blown about in the wind of the chilly darkness, in a subject very strange to Veronese, the *Crucifixion* (Uffizi, 636), may indicate some apprehension in him of tragic elements in nature; but we shall presently meet with the same incident in Tintoret—treated, as might be expected, with far surpassing poetic feeling.

TINTORETTO has already cast his shadow before, for his was a figure towering over most, even in the great age of Venetian art. For vigour of imagination he excelled even Titian, but so consuming was the fire of his genius that he could not wait fittingly to clothe his thoughts, but, rushing from canvas to canvas, dashed upon each in turn the idea burning in his brain; we have the result in magnificent sketches rather than pictures, and in the absence of the transparent tones, rich harmonies of colour, and solid finish that properly belong to Venice.

Powerful in everything, his great gifts found "room and verge enough" in landscape, which Mr. Ruskin is never weary of extolling. All "landscape grandeur," he says, "vanishes before that of Titian and Tintoret, and the latter is every way the greater master." Yet, with rare exceptions, there is no calmness in the grandeur of Tintoret; there is no sublime simplicity, no still and golden glow. His grandeur consists in a certain melancholy strain which leads him to prefer a saddened twilight, or a stormy sky, or strange accidents of illumination, and especially (Mr. Ruskin considers it his chief characteristic) in an apprehension of space, "in which," he says, "Tintoret stands alone among the dead masters, being the first who introduced the slightness and confusion of touch which are expressive of the effects of luminous objects seen through large spaces of air." We may suspect that this "slightness and confusion" were somewhat owing to that hasty and impulsive execution of which we have spoken; yet this again may have been due in great part, as already

hinted, to thick-coming thoughts and a sense of the infiniteness of things, which allows of no precision. We may more entirely accept the statement that in pure and imaginative power "Tintoret stands far at the head even of men of most gigantic power in this respect."

JACOPO ROBUSTI, or IL TINTORETTO, the "dyer's son" (1512-1594), did not get on well with his master, Titian, some five-and-thirty years his senior, and who, notwithstanding the difference of age, is said to have been jealous of him. The one so calm, the other so hasty, and, though so young, equal in genius, how was it likely the two should agree? But he knew the value of Titian's colour, writing up in his studio the famous yet vain boast—"The drawing of Michael Angelo, the colouring of Titian." We smile at the boast and call it vain, since "slightness and confusion of touch" must needs fail beside the stern precision of the Florentine in drawing, while in colour not only will the same defects leave him far behind Titian, but his preference for striking contrasts of light and shade hinders that rich integrity of tint which distinguishes the greatest of colourists. Yet, though to fail in colour is to fail grievously in landscape, Tintoret, by virtue of his vivid imagination and his perception of the tragic capabilities of landscape, especially as shown in the mysteries of light and darkness, reached something that was beyond the range of Titian.

The Scuola di San Rocco at Venice is the temple of his fame. Fifty-seven of his great works occupy the panels of its magnificent halls, but they are sadly perished, and, from necessities of architecture, most of them wretchedly lighted. A series of etchings from them would be of great value, but the difficulties of execution would be enormous, and have, we may fear, daunted Mr. Ruskin from fulfilling what was in his mind when he wrote—"Of these and all the other thoughts of indescribable power that are now fading from the walls of those neglected chambers I may, perhaps, endeavour at some future time to preserve some image and shadow more faithfully than by words." At any rate we must be content for the present with the two or three brilliant sketches in words, bestowed upon us in *Modern Painters*.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Ruskin dwells particularly upon the *Baptism*, where "the river flows fiercely under the shadow of a great rock." "From its opposite shore thickets of close gloomy foliage rise against the roll-

<sup>1</sup> See vol. ii. pp. 171-175.





FIG. 127.—TINTORET'S MAGDALEN IN THE WILDERNESS.

*Page 371.*

ing chasm of heaven, through which breaks the brightness of the descending Spirit." Far away "is seen a vision of wild melancholy boundless light, the sweep of the desert, and the figure of Christ therein, alone, with His arms lifted as in supplication or ecstasy, 'borne of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.'"

Another subject, described as no other pen could do it, is the *Massacre of the Innocents*; this picture, however, though a wonderful instance of the power of chiaroscuro, has less to do with landscape, but in the following passage it is explicitly dealt with. "I should exhaust the patience of the reader if I were to dwell at length on the various stupendous developments of the imagination of Tintoret in the Scuola di San Rocco alone. I would fain join awhile in that solemn pause of the *Journey into Egypt*, where the silver boughs of the shadowy trees lace with their tremulous lines the alternate folds of fair cloud flushed by faint crimson light, and lie across the streams of blue between those rosy islands, like the white wakes of wandering ships; or watch beside the *Sleep of the Disciples*, among those massy leaves that lie so heavily on the dead of night beneath the descent of the angel of the agony, and toss fearfully above the motion of the torches, as the troop of the betrayer emerges out of the hollows of the olives."

Something, we think, must be allowed for in these descriptions, due to impressions produced upon one so gifted as this author, who, spending hours, perhaps, alone in those "vast, neglected chambers," surrendered himself to the silent eloquence of great works. Few but will confess to a feeling of disappointment when standing before the gray, worn pictures themselves. Some not mentioned by Mr. Ruskin seemed to us even more remarkable as landscapes. Of one we venture to give a sketch taken under such almost impossible conditions of light that much of its wild fancy may have been overlooked (Fig. 127); but there may at least be noted another instance of the "rolling chasm" in the clouds, and the fitful gleam that falls upon the low hill with its one projecting crag, that rims with silvery light each bush and tree, and flashes upon the wandering water. Whether the Magdalen, if it be she (*The Magdalen in the Wilderness*, if rightly described), sees some strange sight where the heavens open, who can say? It is probable that she does, and that the painter saw it too, but so decayed is the picture that the Magdalen was only gradually visible to the writer. He would point out, however, that the

rim of light cast around objects, themselves in shade, is a striking incident of effect newly seized upon by art.

In one of the rooms of this noble building a whole length of wall is occupied by Tintoretto's *Crucifixion*, to our mind by far the most dramatic, historical, and therefore impressive presentment of that supreme event. Mr. Ruskin has called attention to some of the sublime imaginings of this wonderful work—to the glory that has become ashy pale round the head of Him who dies forsaken of the Father; to the withered palm-leaves of the triumph, upon which the foal of an ass now makes its meal! But he has only noticed in the landscape "that there remains a chasm of light on the mountain horizon where the earthquake darkness closes upon the day." Yet the approach of this unnatural night is the finest landscape-thought in the picture. It comes with a rushing mighty wind from behind the doomed city, foreshadowing its fate. The trees—some dark and massive in their foliage, some thin and spectral—bow weightily beneath it or toss in the tormented air. The towers and battlements are lit only by the last light of day, fast disappearing on the horizon. The engravings so entirely miss all this that a sketch is appended which, though taken, like the other, under great disadvantages of light, may explain the description.<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 128).

With the admiration expressed by Mr. Ruskin for the two great pictures in the Church of the Madonna dell' Orto it is difficult altogether to concur, at least so far as the landscape is concerned. Yet if, in the *Golden Calf*, Tintoret "takes a grand fold of horizontal cloud straight from the flanks of the Alps, and shows the forests of the mountains through its misty volume like seaweed through the deep sea," what can be finer? To Tintoret must at least be granted the merit of having suggested this grand thing to Mr. Ruskin. In the other picture, the *Last Judgment*, Mr. Ruskin sees "the oceans of the earth and the waters of the firmament . . . gathered into one white ghastly cataract."<sup>2</sup> But the cataract certainly takes a singularly artificial shape. It is that of a vast weir which, if not untrue to the age-long plunge of waters that make Niagara, is not that of a raging inundation.

In the Academy at Venice are the *Fall of Adam* and the

<sup>1</sup> As the usual copies, photographic or other, have missed so much, it is possible they may have misinterpreted a figure which, so far as I could make it out, might be that of St. Peter standing alone at the back of the crowd, clasping his hands and looking upward, while behind him there seems to be a fallen tree.

<sup>2</sup> *Modern Painters*, ii. 177.





*Murder of Abel*, both, says Mr. Ruskin, "finest possible Tintorets; best possible examples of what in absolute power of painting is supremest work, so far as I know, in the world." Yet they illustrate what he says presently, that "painting has now become a dark instead of a bright art"—they show "the thunder-cloud upon us rent with fire," a remark which indicates the direction in which this transcendent genius was to lead art astray, and work, especially in landscape, abundant mischief. In the "murder" scene the trees remind our great critic of Turner's group in the *Marly*; they form a graceful "contiguity of shade," but show, in comparison with Titian's *Peter Martyr*, the haste and slightness of his rival; so we should say do the "several large tree trunks (in two landscapes at the end of the Scuola di San Rocco) drawn with two strokes of his brush, one for the dark and another for the light side." That this, however, was owing to carelessness, Mr. Ruskin strenuously denies.

At any rate Tintoret is not always hasty in his trees, much as he was tempted with rapid sweep of brush to express only their dark umbrageous masses. In the Colonna Palace at Rome is a *Narcissus*, superb in landscape, where light breaks from behind a thick cluster of tree-trunks on the left; the whole woodland, instinct with all the vigour of tree-life. In the Capitol is also a wonderfully original *Baptism*, fine in colour, wherein a number of gay ladies are sitting in a row on the edge of the water (scarcely prepared, we should say, to undress), and in front are trees defined to each particular leaf. At Castle Howard the two prized landscape pictures of the *Temptation* and the *Sacrifice of Israel*, though they do not exhibit that startling originality of treatment we should expect from Tintoret in such subjects, yet show vigour and picturesqueness in the groups of trees that in both cases tower from side and summit on the craggy heights.

Tintoret can be wildly extravagant; a picture at Brussels of the *Martyrdom of St. Mark* is so. The sea, the clouds, the lightning are painted with reckless vehemence out of his own head, and with no reverence for those majestic powers of nature; but Tintoret can show a noble calm sometimes, as for instance in that *Entombment* at Parma about which Mr. Ruskin has much to say,<sup>1</sup> and of which in vol. iii. p. 324 he gives a fine engraving. He refers to it as illustrating the Venetian love of gloom and wildness. To us, comparing it with other works of Tintoret's, it seems rather to illustrate his

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Painters*, ii. 168.

occasional exercise of sustained and quiet power; it is solemn more than wild. Very significant is the treatment of the dark rocky hill of the sepulchre to the left, in its contrast to that of the fifteenth-century literalists, Italian or Flemish. There is nothing here of the sharply-lighted quarry, but the mossy masses bound with roots, seamed with grasses, moist with dew, and wrapped in shadow, retain all the mystery of a rocky scene, dimly visible when day is almost done. Yet Tintoret, like Titian, knew where to give the most precise delineation. A few leaves and pendulous grasses are intensely defined against the clear, distant, ineffable splendour in the west, which in another moment will be gone. Artistically he gains much by this one instance of strong and vivid contrast between light and dark, but poetically he gains much more; there is here that contrast between the individual and the Infinite to which we have before referred<sup>1</sup> as having so strange a fascination; the fluttering leaf, the broken blade of grass, and beyond—heaven's depths of light! Yet scarcely less impressive are those gloomy shades above, against which the trembling leaves are scarcely seen, lost in front of that dark mystery! If, along with all this, we note the sweeps of cloud, the ruined shed (especially with Mr. Ruskin's interpretation), the three lonely crosses upon a bushy bluff, and the stream with its glimmering light beneath, we feel that Tintoret has given us here the result of perfect poetic vision.

But perhaps there is no more remarkable instance of Tintoret's quiet mood than in the landscape of a portrait at the Colonna Palace, Rome; a man sits playing the spinnet alone, his window open to the sunset. It is a solemn blood-red sunset over a dark ensanguined sea. Across the gloomy waste there stretches one narrow spit of land bearing a solitary campanile, and a few low trees; dusky bands of cloud roof in the scene, but a few thin streaks burn crimson and gold; above, some wild duck are flying homeward from the broad lagoon. This is a sunset of three hundred years ago which gave pause to restless Tintoret. (Fig. 129.)

Nor was it this once only. In the Pitti is another portrait with an evening view over the lagoons; there is no form, but the indistinct somethings are very suggestive. There is nothing certain but a gondola, a sea-line, and a low sun breaking dimly for a moment through belts of level clouds.

<sup>1</sup> Chapter iv. p. 83.

We have already indicated some points of difference between Titian and Tintoret, the two master minds in sixteenth-century landscape. We may sum up the comparison in saying that while Titian, in balance of great qualities and accomplished methods, was the more perfect artist in his expression of poetical ideas,

FIG. 129.—SUNSET OVER THE LAGOONS: TINTORET.

Tintoret was the greater poet in pictorial art, but with less command of his materials.

"The Venetian school of landscape," says Mr. Ruskin, "expired with Tintoret, and the sixteenth century closed like a grave over the great art of the world." Why this should be, belongs in part to that investigation of the lapse and flow of tides in the affairs of men which the philosophical historian has to discuss. As regards our subject, we may say that the time had come, as always occurs in the history of creative genius, whether in literature or the arts, when originality is succeeded by imitation. Arrived, then, at this point it will be convenient to glance back upon the course of landscape-art as we have traced it to this fateful moment, when, upon the verge of taking its place as a distinct and noble sphere for the genius of art, it lost for a time the grandeur and power necessary to its highest development.



Whatever there was of landscape in classic times was, as we have seen, gradually lost as all that was classic disappeared. It sank in Byzantine hands into miserable conventionalism, and when the mediæval western monks began to develop the art of the manuscripts, their landscape-forms at first were conventional almost to the extent of being hieroglyphic; colours were long but simple primaries, and gold became increasingly the great resource for background. But the "Miniaturists," favoured by their delicate material, made manifest advance. By 1300 A.D. gradated tints, though still as gay as the pigments will admit, are introduced, and a real scene appears; later it is arched by a real sky, and by the end of the fourteenth century genuine landscape comes to aid the sacred story.

Dr. Von Eye, in his *Life of Dürer*, well summarises the character of this landscape as it prevailed during the fifteenth century:—"To be sure, the heavens are always glowing in the purest light. The earthly soil must not approach the heavenly guests; at the most, little flecks of white cloud cross the pure blue, but this is only to show the more its depth and purity. And there is an earth to match the heavens; it is green and smiling, as if nothing had ever touched it since the days of paradise. No dead leaf, no dry branch bestrews the earth upon which the holy personages tread, and no flower is crushed beneath their feet."

But this is chiefly north of the Alps, and especially as carried to perfection by the Van Eycks, Memlinc, and others of the Flemish school, who, advantaged by their oil medium, give us the most exquisite lucidity of atmosphere, rich verdure, vast and Alp-crowned distance, with, in many instances, very faithful delineations of mountain form.

Italy in its art-revival, beginning with mural instead of manuscript work, developed in Masaccio certain simple, noble elements of landscape which, overborne for a time by the influx of the Flemish style, with all its gay innumerable objects and elaborate finish, eventually chastened and refined that style, producing in Florentine and Roman art a landscape of superior grace and harmony, yet tending towards the triviality of classic sentiment, and somewhat poor in colour.

Germany, deriving its art in the first instance from Flanders, took to the conscientious study of form in its minutest detail, and to the exposition of drear fantastic fancies, rising into a melancholy majesty in Dürer, as he surveys "the wilderness of this world," and

ponders its mystic meanings; further, in the hands of Altdorfer, German art strove to depict those scenic yet transient effects in sky and cloud which add so powerfully to nature's range of expression. Germany, as time went on, learnt much from Italy, but presently returned whatever it had learnt to the far more gifted school of the Adriatic.

To Venice belongs the honour of harmonising Northern and Southern landscape-art, imparting a grandeur unknown before, and enriching with a colour before undreamed of. The grandeur is shown in a prevailing choice of the noblest forms in landscape, and the most impressive effects. The colour is distinguished by a scale of peculiar subtlety, combined with a splendour finely subdued. It is not so much shadow as depth of tone that predominates; the mountain gloom is understood, the forest darkness, the lowering masses of cloud; and the splendour is that of glowing evening; a calm rich poetry breathes in every scene. Titian reaches the height of this. Then Tintoret takes for the moment a wild flight higher still. He seems to see something of the awful side of nature. He has vision of her unrestful, changeful, nay, stormy moods. He tries to render this upon his large canvases, but the vision has passed all too quickly for him.

It is at this point that the conventional returns—the conventional, not of hieroglyphic forms, but of art itself. It is discovered that Titian and Tintoret may be reduced to rule, and their wonders wrought by the yard. Their rich imaginings yield endless effects for use, and in our next section we must follow the result in a famous school of second-hand art.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE LANDSCAPE OF THE CARRACCI SCHOOL.

Ludovico Carracci	. 1555-1619.	Cristofano Allori	. 1577-1621.
Agostino Carracci	. 1558-1601.	Scarsellino.	. 1560-1621.
Annibale Carracci	. 1560-1609.	Lanfranco .	. 1581-1647.
Domenichino .	. 1581-1641.	Sisto Badalocchio	. 1581-1647.
Francesco Albani	. 1578-1660.	Schedone .	. -1615.
Guido Reni .	. 1575-1642.	Caravaggio .	. 1569-1609.
Allori (Bronzino)	. 1502-1572.	Domenico Feti .	. 1589-1624.
Alessandro Allori	. 1535-1607.	Guercino .	. 1591-1666.

"THE tower of Titianesque art fell southwards, and on the dust of its ruins grew various art-weeds, such as Domenichino and the Carracci. Their landscape, which may in few words be accurately defined as 'scum of Titian,' possesses no single merit nor any ground for the forgiveness of demerit; they are named only as a link through which the Venetian influence came dimly down to Claude and Salvator."<sup>1</sup>

Thus writes the master of modern criticism in art. But we must remember that more recently "Titianesque art" has been assailed by the same master in such style that hardly any tower is left to fall! We must endeavour to be more tolerant, perhaps more just, if less brilliant. Titianesque art was indeed a tower, and it fell, but out of its ruins there arose some fair structures, put together by ingenious hands, without the spaciousness, without the splendour, without the heaven-piercing majesty of the great original, but not without a character of their own—an interest of their own—as may perhaps appear when we survey the domains of "Eclecticism."

Titianesque art had developed that technical skill which, unless supported by transcendent genius, inevitably engenders the conventional, and at the end of the sixteenth century the age of creative genius in Italy was coming altogether to an end. Of the poets of

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Painters*, iii. 325.

this period, 1550 to 1600, we have already quoted the justly disparaging estimate of Mr. Hallam;<sup>1</sup> in the same passage he speaks of their "secondary yet very seducing beauties of style," and he points to the great influence which the chiefest of them—Tasso—exercised over the Bolognese painters of whom we are about to speak. As to subject and scenery this is apparent in their pictures, and certainly it was in "the secondary yet seducing beauties of style" that they excelled.

Yet the Carracci had a fine aim. There had intervened between them and the great period of art gone by, the class of painters called the "Mannerists," to whom the stigma of "scum" might be applied much more fitly than to the school of the Carracci. The Mannerists were men who set themselves to imitate the manner of this, that, and the other of the great masters. To the very greatness of the masters was due this servile kind of imitation; when the power to create had ceased, the power to imitate remained; but this rapidly degenerated into a mindless exaggeration of points of style, while the mindless admiration of patrons provided plenty of employment. Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Correggio were the three after whom the Mannerists chiefly thronged, and so with tricks of graceful attitude some thought themselves second Raphaels; others, with portentously swelling muscles and extravagances of posture, would fain excel Michael Angelo; while the fascinating softness and lovely tints of Correggio raised a host of degraded copyists.

It is remarkable that this sort of mannered imitation did not follow upon the greatness of Titian. Was it that his art was too stately, too symmetrical, to be thus imitated? We have already spoken of several who were formed or influenced by Titian, but they were all men capable of holding their own, and if they fell into "manner" it was, like Bassano's or Veronese's, a manner of their own. There was something in that perfect glow of colour, that superb harmony and calm dignity, that did not suit the Mannerist.

It was towards the Mannerists of Rome, of Florence, of Parma, of Ferrara—each exaggerating the merits or defects of a master—that "a slow, thoughtful, melancholy boy," LUDOVICO CARRACCI of Bologna, conceived an early distaste. His slowness seems to have indicated a philosophical temper, pondering principles and seeking a broad foundation for things. He was truly a student—a student

<sup>1</sup> Chapter iii. p. 44.

always; he went from school to school, and from master to master, patiently studying characteristics, excellences, defects. He sought after an ideal standard of perfection, and he believed that by dint of learning and thought—by dint, in fact, of science in pictorial art—it might be lifted out of the empirical stage into a true, sound, and progressive condition, not dependent upon the tastes and likings of individuals or the mere imitation of any particular master. So he founded the first “Academy,” and the learned mediocrity, too often the sole result of academic teaching, has been laid at his door.

Ludovico has also been unfairly weighted with the “Eclecticism” propounded in a famous sonnet by his cousin Agostino,<sup>1</sup> and which, enlarging the motto of Tintoret, appeared to recommend an impossible union of the excellences of all schools. It may more reasonably be regarded as a compliment, in the usual extravagant terms of an Italian compliment, to “our Niccolino” than as a serious canon in art; but it helped to fasten the title of “Eclectics” upon the school to which its author belonged. Ludovico’s own conception we may take to have been that of ascertaining the fundamental principles to which all art must conform, gathering those principles from the admitted excellences of different schools, and producing from them an harmonious whole. Genius, however, does not work by such processes. It seizes, by an instinct it cannot explain, upon some congenial aspect of nature, and vividly reproduces it.

But for success on his own ground the times were against him. Not only had the powers of original genius failed from the Italian mind, and consequently none but a mechanical and conventional use could be made of rules, but the religious sentiment of the day, become thoroughly sensuous, had degraded art into the endless representation of tearful virgins and tortured saints. The coarseness of Jesuit taste as compared with the Franciscan in treatment of divine things is remarkable, and the former was now superseding the latter (Ludovico was born in the year of Loyola’s death). The art of Ludovico had therefore a depraved field of religious emotion to work in, and he was so far influenced by it that his characteristic

<sup>1</sup> “Let him who wishes to be a good painter acquire the design of Rome, Venetian action and Venetian management of shade, the dignified colour of Lombardy, the terrible manner of Michael Angelo, Titian’s truth and nature; the sovereign purity of Correggio’s style, and the just symmetry of Raphael; the decorum and well-grounded study of Tibaldi; the invention of the learned Primaticcio, and a little of Parmigianino’s grace; or, without so much study and weary labour, let him apply himself to imitate the works which our Niccolino has left us here.”—Eastlake’s Translation.

subjects were of the mournful sentimental cast. The agonies of martyrs fell to later hands to depict.

Ludovico associated with himself, as earnest supporters of his views and fellow-workers in the academy, his two cousins, Agostino and Annibale Carracci. They all dealt more or less in landscape, which may be looked at with more satisfaction than their huge academical figure-subjects. Annibale painted expressly landscape-pictures, and thus the Carracci school forms an essential link in the story of landscape-art.

The most imitable point in Titian was his handling,—the brush-work with which, especially in the rapid and powerful style of his great old age, he expressed the character and surface of objects. This served him in much stead in expressing foliage, as may be seen in his *Baptist in the Wilderness*. Tintoret, as we know, revelled in this vigorous touch. It was a captivating technicality, and one of those things sure to be admired and followed in secondary art. Again the alternations of light and shade over a landscape—the gleams that flit here and there, and the careering glooms—were picturesque incidents easily caught by inferior men; nor less within their reach was clever composition. All these Titianesque elements, already appropriated by the genius of Tintoret, were made skilful use of by the Carracci; but, if skilful, it was not more than skilful; there is always much that is mere paint; tints are laid on with little trouble, and are consequently without depth, transparency, or glow. Of colour, as it was understood by the Venetians, there was small appreciation, and, curiously enough, in Agostino's sonnet, colour is not the quality which he attributes to the Venetian, but to the Lombard school, probably meaning thereby the colour of Leonardo.

The landscape of Ludovico is of this Titianesque type, but shows in its usually cool soft tones more perhaps of the influence of Correggio than of Titian, while there is a genuine simplicity of his own. He liked buildings with quiet broad effects of light and shade. In simple silhouette he puts in picturesque little bits, as in the corner of his *Transfiguration* at Bologna. A *Pietà* by him in the Bridgewater Gallery is characteristic in the gray simplicity of its landscape; and a *Virgin and Child with a kneeling Angel*, a small picture, has a landscape of gray greeny blues finely generalised, while its low broken hills are half obscured by cloud. In this little gem there may, however, be a suspicion of Bril, the Fleming, of whose

association with the Carracci we shall have to speak. In Ludovico's picture at Parma of the *Apostles at the Tomb of the Madonna* there are large and very effective lines of landscape. Sometimes, indeed, he could be almost romantic. In his *Birth of the Baptist* (Bologna) there are very vigorously drawn trees interlacing across a dark blue sky; and in the *Conversion of Saul*, at the same Gallery, there is a fine generalised suggestion of old walls, sloping downs, and a distance of towers and pinnacles against the sky which, with a bridge or aqueduct, make up what may fairly be called a romantic landscape. Sometimes too he is quite in the Venetian tradition, if the *Martyrdom of St. Stephen* in the Corsini Palace at Rome be by him. It is a landscape powerful in its colour and effects, but harsh and conventional in its opposition of strong blues and browns. As a rule there is less vigour in Ludovico than in either of his cousins, but more pathos, as indeed we might expect from one praised by Sir Joshua Reynolds for "the solemn effect of twilight which seems diffused over his pictures."

AGOSTINO, who, as may be judged from his sonnet, was the literary man of the three, gave himself much to engraving, one of his principal works being a copy of Tintoret's *Crucifixion*, highly praised by the old painter himself. He has left also several landscape drawings, abounding in picturesque incident and composition; trees with waving foliage and rooted amongst crags, lean, twist, and twine in every variety of arboreal attitude; a rough foot-bridge crosses a chasm in the hills, and a shepherd, stepping on the narrow plank, bears a lamb upon his shoulders (see a drawing in the Uffizi). In the Pitti is a drawing in distemper, in which composition does its utmost—crag sets to crag; a castle crowns a precipice, its dark walls rising in front of rolling clouds; and broken stumps jut out in the foreground. Learning prevails over nature, and crowds the scene with contrasts, incidents, and effects. (Fig. 130.) At Turin there is a singular subject by him,—peasants climbing a tree; it is black and crude in effect, but undoubtedly vigorous; there is nothing of that mealy smoothness too often found in Claude, nor of the feebleness sometimes apparent in Gaspar Poussin. In parts there is something Titianesque, but it is wanting in the unity, calm, and glow of the great Cadorino; here is the imitator of his handling and chiaroscuro in a rough way, but nothing more. Nevertheless the Agostino landscape is important for its thorough adoption of the picturesque and romantic style. But there are always excep-





**FIG. 181.—LANDSCAPE: ANNIBALE CARRACCI, LOUVRE.**

tions; and a picture assigned to Agostino at Castle Howard, the *Virgin and Child with St. John*, has an altogether graceful little landscape, though without depth or power.

It is ANNIBALE who, as we have said, takes decided rank among landscape painters, though, but for a particular influence, he might not have equalled his brother Agostino. This influence was Flemish. Annibale went to Rome, and there made the acquaintance of Paul Bril, the Flemish landscape painter, with whom afterwards he

FIG. 130.—FROM A DRAWING BY AGOSTINO CARRACCI, PITTL

frequently worked, putting in figures for Bril, or accepting Bril's aid for the landscape portions of his own pictures. Nevertheless, there are several landscapes attributed to Annibale himself. In the Louvre is a fishing scene (No. 134) with a fine expanse of landscape—windy, cloudy, and shot with gleams of sun, but, with all its cleverness, lacking that simplicity belonging to first-rate art, which even Ludovico attained. On the other hand, there is in No. 133 a scene full of fine repose, breathing the very spirit of evening; musicians in a boat suit the hour with their strains as they glide along the water (Fig. 131). Another (No. 135) shows a hunt, a rich brown half-woodland scene; between the trees are

glimpses of hills, besprinkled with villages, and a cloud cuts across one of their dark summits. Two subjects—the *Sacrifice of Abraham*, and the *Death of Absalom*—are hard and cold, but full of “points” to regale the lust of the artistic eye. A *Martyrdom of St. Stephen* is well bedecked with towers and mountains and richly-touched trees, offering many capital “bits”; but of finer quality is *Diana and Calisto*, a simply-composed scene, reposing in quiet twilight; this portion, however, is said to have been painted by Bril.

At Berlin is a large long landscape, showing a high building, with a bridge, and pleasure-boats about on the water. This scene, like the music-party at the Louvre, is characteristic. Pleasure-boats and buildings indicate how much the artificial prevailed over the natural in the landscape of this school. Even Giorgione did not put his “conversation” parties amidst palace-gardens; Titian gives open country, with its woods and hills, if he gives it at all; Tintoret startles us with his dark wildernesses; the spirit of nature breathes in each of these. With the Carracci, and especially with him who gave himself most to landscape—Annibale—the aim is to crowd in as much of human life as possible; a palace, a bridge, and an island of tea-garden type, occur far too often; see, for instance, in the National Gallery, No. 50, with its boats and foolish figures scattered about, and water and hills alike of a dull green! Very superior to this, but of the same ornamental character, are the four large landscapes by Annibale in the Doria Gallery at Rome. They are essentially decorative art, but contain much good work. In that which bears the title of the *Assumption of the Virgin* the distant sea-line with a blue promontory, and graceful bending trees, the deep still water with a ripple sparkling on the quiet shore, and a few Roman ruins, make up a scene that cannot help but please. The *Entombment* has still higher qualities. The city, to which the murderers of “that Just One” have returned, is seen through a vista of dark rocks, sunk in gloom, and backed by gloomy mountains. Nor is there less of landscape feeling in the *Flight into Egypt*, where a small walled town rises dark in shade against a sky of flitting light clouds. Two pictures in the Bridgewater Gallery differ so greatly in the landscapes that they can hardly be by the same hand. In the *Diana and Calisto*, the figures remind one of Dresden china, and the landscape is particularly harsh and artificial; what with the crowded composition, the dabs of shade, the flutter of light, unity is hopeless. May we not suspect the work of another hand? In the *Danae*, on

the contrary, cold and opaque as it is in its unimpressive bigness, there is a fine stretch of landscape seen through a window. A broad "strath" lies in low light, and two trees in the centre wave against a mass of majestic white clouds that roll along the horizon. Here is the Italian following the fine traditions of his art, rather than the Fleming with his fondness for a green gaiety.

Another example leaves us in doubt as to which influence has prevailed; this is the celebrated *Domine quo Vadis* of the National Gallery. The figures have all the excellences of the Carracci school in admirable drawing, and cast of light and shade, while its defects are also apparent in the absence of feeling, and in the hard and academic, if correct, definition of form. For *feeling* we must turn to the landscape, undefined, cool, silvery. In the quiet twilight of the early morning—an hour that would suit the apostle's flight from Rome—the trees are soft glooms, and a pool of dark water is broken only by dim reflections. A temple like that of Vesta stands in the midst of the early silence, and the gray-blue distant mountains suggest the Alban hills; Correggio-tints abound. Yet, remembering that Paul Bril's best works are of this miniature character, we wonder whether his hand is to be traced here?

More certain to have been Annibale's own is a very Giorgionesque piece of landscape (No. 25), *St. John in the Wilderness*. There is no light and shade; it is all colour, warm and brown, with one white cloud, and bushy banks after Titian's manner, though, unlike him, one dead stem shows against the sky. There is in this a fusing power and readiness which does not look like the work of an assistant. As to the vigorous sketches of *Silenus* and *Pan* (93, 94) we may be sure those rapid strokes are the master's. In No. 94 the low sweeping hills and a solitary tower or two, express a feeling for the wide and lonely which makes us think that, left to himself, Annibale would not so often have crowded his scenes with artificial incident.

The Carracci have been called "the founders of modern landscape." This can only be true in a technical sense, and must chiefly apply to Annibale. It is certainly noticeable that a painter of as much ability and reputation in the strongholds of figure-painting, should occupy himself so frequently with pure landscape. This no doubt helped to establish landscape as a distinct branch of art; but for the most part he contributed to the practice of it little more than a bold dashing in of effects, and a clever disposition of masses.

Annibale, like Agostino, left several drawings; many are at Paris, some at the Bridgewater Gallery; among them are landscapes exquisitely picturesque in feeling, and graceful in composition. Take, for instance, one in the last-named gallery: a sloping bank crowned with a few trees ends in a rocky projection, nodding over a stream in the very manner of Bewick. The bistre-pen has been used here, as in other subjects of the kind, to record impressions more distinctly modern than even those which Titian put upon paper. But while there is a gain in freedom of touch and suggestiveness, especially in the foreground, there is a loss of some of the nobler, severer qualities, which were not to be regained through long periods of art. These men of great ability but not of genius, were founders only of a landscape-art in which picturesque composition and vigorous light and shade were the ruling excellences.

In the landscape of DOMENICHINO (1581-1641) Mr. Ruskin "once thought there was some life," but entirely altered his opinion, not, as we understand, from further study, but from disgust at certain great altar-pieces at Bologna which contain no landscape. Yet it is possible that this slow laborious man might be less to blame for these disagreeable pictures than the rapidly debasing taste of his age, which set him upon such tasks—tasks which have the appearance of not having been executed "con amore."

Like Ludovico Carracci before him, Domenichino in his student days was called an "ox," but Annibale pronounced that this "ox" would plough well and successfully the soil of art, rendering it the more fruitful in future. Certainly his was not the genius to cast the seed of the future into the soil; he did no more than plough faithfully what lay about him with a sort of patient strength—a strength excelling that of most of his contemporaries, and which certainly did not shrink from any horrors he might find himself called upon to deal with.

Said to be the son of a shoemaker at Bologna, Domenico Zampieri or "little Domenic" had been a student under the Flemish landscapist, Denys Calvart (who had established a school in Bologna, that city of schools), before he entered the studio of the Carracci; one of the numerous instances of the Flemish influence upon Italian landscape. Like Annibale, Domenichino painted pictures which were truly landscapes, and, looking at the huge, confused, but powerful subjects in the Bologna Gallery, we might wish he had confined

himself to scenes in which, perforce, the modesty of nature must have more or less asserted itself. Fortunately some of his Roman pictures display a dignity as well as power which redeem him as a figure-painter.

In one of those unhappy pictures at Bologna (No. 207) the scenery of the *Martyrdom* is thrown in with grace, there is a clever stream of light introduced, and trees over a stretch of hills are bowing before the wind. But, while there is wind, there is no air no transparency, no depth. In his *Peter Martyr* at the same gallery, there is a singular but vulgar imitation of Titian in the figures, but all the poetry that dwells in the gloom, the richness, and the noble forms of the original is absent. The distant landscape is indeed careful and good in its lines, but there is no mystery nor suggestiveness.

At Rome, in the Borghese Gallery, the large composition representing *Diana and her Nymphs* gives occasion for landscape, but it is uninteresting in its monotonous daylight, and is especially heavy and poor in the foliage; there is, however, a picturesque group of trees on a low grassy hill, and a refreshing glimpse of open campagna. The landscape of his famous *Communion of St. Jerome* in the Vatican, on the contrary, is a very graceful scene; tall richly-foliaged trees encircle a stately palace in perfect composition, a still band of cloud lies athwart the sky, and a charmingly quiet tone pervades the whole. At Naples again, in the *Guardian Angel defending Innocence*, there is a quiet piece of deep-toned landscape, and the Titian touch is imitated in trees of varied grace.

Coming nearer home, the Louvre possesses landscapes among which we find Domenichino at his best. No. 480 shows fishermen with their nets upon a seashore, in a landscape fine and simple in feeling. It is an evening sea, a little town on a promontory is lost in shade, and on a central hill the tall old houses and towers, and the massive foliage around them, give a dignity to the scene which is only marred by the profusion of human incident in the foreground. Another, *Erminia and the Shepherds* (Fig. 132), displays a wide mountainous landscape, not devoid of truth, not without some grandeur, while clouds somewhat like those of Bellini in the *Crisostomo* sail slowly across the sky.

There are several landscapes by Domenichino in England, but they exhibit more of his faults than of his merits. At the Duke of Westminster's, for instance, the *Meeting of David and Abigail*, which

goes by the name of "a grand landscape," is crowded with objects—water winds about for the purpose apparently of showing plenty of scudding boats, and the navigation of a hay-barge; queer, characterless, unreal trees are put in for the sake of the light that glitters through them; clouds are twisted into puffs and wisps; lights and darks, and things without number pursue each other across the canvas.

FIG. 132.—ERMINIA AND THE SHEPHERDS: DOMENICHINO.

At the Bridgewater Gallery a landscape with fishermen (No. 61) is artificial to a degree. Again there is a lake with boats, and crowds of little gay figures are dotted about like an operatic scene. Surely the Flemish prettiness and pettiness have here, as sometimes with Annibale, perverted Italian taste and tradition? But if, as with the last named of the Carracci, we meet with this landscape of the landscape-gardener in Domenichino, we also, as with Annibale, meet not seldom with a more worthy strain. We have already quoted examples, and in the Bridgewater collection one more may be instanced, in which a massive pile of buildings and masses of solid umbrage rise in mid-distance in front of a white cloudy sky, and of a distant sweep of hill. The simplicity and dignity of this picture justify Domenichino's reputation.

This and other works of the kind make us feel that Domenichino should have been a better landscape-painter than, upon the whole, he was. He was not without poetic feeling, and in his historical works often caught the unstudied grace of nature. He was a man, too, who, being of a modest, gentle disposition, loving solitude, and fond of the soothing influences of music, should have shown more sympathy with the calm beauty or the solemn grandeur of scenery; but he was always an imitator, and unfortunately seldom looked farther than his models, the Carracci, for imitation. The greater painters were all translated for him by them, while to his Flemish masters in landscape he was frequently in bonds. So it is that he gives us too obvious composition, too much of "object," too much of everything—an excess significant of the decline of taste. Oh for the Perugino peace, the simplicity of Bartolommeo, the soft atmosphere of Correggio, the majesty of Titian! To deal with a crowd of things needs the soul of a Tintoret, and honest Domenichino had none of it. But what he did, he did earnestly, and with a well-taught hand.

With the Carracci and with Domenichino, spite of their faults, there was vigour; as much cannot be said for FRANCESCO ALBANI (1578-1660). In the landscape of this painter, while there is no harshness of light and shade, no crudity of colour, no fault in taste, neither is there fertility of invention, nor any hint of the nobler or the grander aspects of nature. But his subjects would not, we may allow, admit of this. What else could he do for the charming groups of little naked boys that he loved to portray, than provide for them a land of perpetual summer, where the "winter of discontent" should never come, nor rocks nor thorns intrude to damage their satin skins!

The son of a rich silk mercer, marrying a rich and beautiful wife, and possessing charming country houses in the neighbourhood of Bologna, Albani lived the life of a wealthy and cultured gentleman. Treading the leafy glades of his woods, sauntering along his park-like meadows, he read his Virgil and his Ovid (in translations), and for him it was enough that landscape should supply an agreeable background to his mythological people and pretty Cupids.

Yet he could not give them sunshine, or win the glow of an Italian evening wherein they might disport. Take a picture in the Brera (323) for example. Look at the dainty little dears at play in a landscape of green paste! There is no air, no trans-



parency, no sunlight! The tree-trunks have no rounded solidity, and beneath them is no springing grass, but a dull carpet of paint! At Turin are four large round pictures with poor smooth landscapes, of which the only good incident is the one dark expanse of sea in each. The rocks are as helpless as any the early men produced, and without their excuse. Take picture after picture of this kind and the verdict is the same, "dark cold green masses—nothing that has a spark of interest."

But, to be just, Albani is not always thus, and, unlike the general run of mediocre artists, his larger pictures are his best. At Bologna, in the *Baptism*, there is a fine imaginative bit thrown in with vigour and something like rich Venetian colour; a Titianesque light is in the sky, and dark blue mountains surge beneath. In the same city, at the Church of the Servi, perhaps the best of his sacred subjects, *Christ and the Magdalen*, is to be found; there, between the two figures which, it must be confessed, are but feebly imagined, lies a sweet calm landscape with a winding stream, a low horizon, and a dark sky; while beyond the rock of the tomb, trees, natural and picturesque, feather into the sky. The Barberini Gallery contains an excellent small landscape—*Christ appearing to Mary*. The crosses are faintly seen on a hill; a solemn bulk of rock in the centre bears graceful trees against the twilight sky, and Jerusalem lies in darkness below. In the same gallery his *Galatea* shows a fine sweeping mountain-landscape, with grand volumes of cloud.

At the Naples Gallery; in the *St. Rosa in Glory*, there is also a well-composed distant landscape, with mountains and sea. These instances, chiefly belonging, it will be seen, to sacred history, surprise one who has hitherto made acquaintance only with the vapid landscape of Albani's usual subjects. Nor must we omit to notice two large pictures in the Colonna Palace, Rome, which are pure landscape, and not without some good points. In one of them there is a fine sweep of champaign country, rising into distant mountain forms, behind which the red light of morning breaks. A stream wanders forth from the plain, and falls in a broad cascade or two in the foreground, which is enclosed with large trees on one side, while rocks, covered with bushes, shut in the other; here a palm stands out rather incongruously. The other landscape is not so good. The subject is probably evening, for beyond a long flat horizon is spread a salmon-tinted light. A town is perched upon poorly painted rocky bluffs to the left, and from the middle of the foreground rises, in dark

silhouette, a tree with a solemn mass of foliage. It is impossible not to notice in these the Claude idea of landscape—Claude was indeed but twenty-two years the junior of Albani. We may gladly note these exceptional instances of true landscape feeling in a painter who, if for the most part insipid in his art, found genuine enjoyment in a certain idyllic aspect of nature. In the man himself, too, there was something pleasing; one is interested in hearing that his handsome wife and eleven beautiful children provided him with models; that he was lively in conversation, and could say sharp things of Guido Reni, who, though a friend and fellow-student, had used him shabbily at Rome—ousting him from the decoration of the Pope's chapel in the Quirinal; and we are certainly sorry to learn that in his last years, through the debts of his brother, he suffered heavy misfortunes, and had to sell Meldola, the most charming of his country places, where he had studied the trees and details of the landscape so characteristic of him.

We have mentioned Guido, unquestionably a much abler man, as of far greater fame, than his quondam friend Albani. This superiority is shown as much in Guido's landscape—what little there is of it—as in the general scope of his art. GUIDO RENI (1575-1642) was, for one thing, a first-rate decorative painter, of which style of art the famous *Aurora*, at the Rospigliosi Palace, is a first-rate specimen; here the landscape is skilfully composed, broad and simple in its forms and effects. For another instance, though of a different kind, we may point to his fresco, painted in competition with Domenichino, in the chapel attached to San Gregorio, Rome—*St. Andrew on his way to Execution*. The scenery, chiefly of bush and bank, and sprays of foliage, is free and graceful in its management, and has all the air of easy mastery.

In the *Samson* at Bologna, however,—one of Guido's most striking pictures, though the figure is only an academy study,—the landscape is something better than decorative. The noble dark expanse, with its solemn line of sea, suits well the prostrate forms of the slain, and the clouds are laid in with large grandeur of effect; there is a really fine suggestion in this scene. The same may be said, though it is much less important, of the simple rise and fall of two opposing hills, with an indication of a few trees on one, and of the three crosses on the other, in the background of the *Madonna della Pietà* in the same gallery. The noted *Crucifixion* at San Lorenzo,

in Lucina at Rome, in which he adopted, in the impressive single figure, a method of treatment only recently introduced, shows also how well he understood the powerful aid of landscape. It is a spectacle of tremendous import yet of the simplest elements; a leaden-hued tempest fills the sky, enveloping the towers of Jerusalem in lurid eclipse.

These works, of far finer sentiment in the character of their landscape than those of the decorative order, are further remarkable as indicating the influence of a master—Caravaggio—opposed alike to the Mannerists and to the Eclectics. This man of original, powerful, yet perverted genius, founded a third school, that of the “Naturalisti,” destined to affect the whole course of art, of which we must say more presently. Guido abandoned his first master Denys Calvart the Fleming, as did his fellow-pupils Domenichino and Albani, for the teaching of Ludovico Carracci, but drew finally, we apprehend, from the works of Caravaggio at Rome more inspiration than from any other source.

Turning meanwhile to a contemporary Eclectic school, to which that of the Carracci had given rise, we find at Florence, in Cristofano Allori, a decided genius for landscape. There were three Alloris. The first, AGNOLO (1502-1572), known as “IL BRONZINO,” is much to be admired for his portraits, which rank him almost with the very highest of the great painters in this line; but otherwise the designation “Court-painter to the Medici” suggests his place in art. Church pictures and subjects, allegorical and mythological, were used to display his taste for the nude, which got him into trouble with the Pope. A predilection of that kind generally leads far away from landscape, and this master has left us nothing of it either to admire or condemn.

Of his nephew, ALESSANDRO ALLORI (1535-1607), who took the name of Bronzino out of respect to his renowned uncle, we can only say that he was in all respects a feebler edition of that uncle; in his church pictures he fell still further into “the lust of the eye and the pride of life,” preferring to paint the Samaritan woman as the courtesan rather than the convert. Of this Allori, however, we are told that he frequently painted Biblical subjects merely as “staffage” to rich landscape.<sup>1</sup> Of the character of that landscape the writer’s notes afford slight information, but we may shrewdly suspect that

<sup>1</sup> Meyer’s *Künstler Lexikon*, i. 505.

it was of small value, although in the Liechtenstein Gallery a subject of his has a somewhat "Titianesque, brown indication of scenery."

CRISTOFANO ALLORI (1577-1621) was the son of the last named. It is significant that he rebelled against the influences which perverted the art of Agnolo and Alessandro, and, adopting more the manner of Correggio, displayed "a feeling, a charm, a naturalness" altogether absent from the works of his father and uncle. Landscape was a congenial field for such a temper, and we find that with conscientious care "he made a number of landscape studies in the neighbourhood of Florence, and painted landscapes partly after the manner of the Netherland painters,"<sup>1</sup> by which we may probably understand, in particular, his contemporary Paul Bril, who spent so much of his life in Italy.

But Allori painted landscape not only from original studies—a practice not then common in Italy—but with Italian feeling for dignity, harmony, and tone, though his delight in finish prevented his showing Italian largeness of style. The story is told of his sending for a Capuchin monk—a twenty hours' journey—and keeping him a fortnight for an hour's sitting each day, in order to perfect the eye of a *St. Francis praying*; and again, that for the drapery of a *Judith* a dress hung upon his lay figure till it fell to pieces! It was this love of finish, combined with admiration of Correggio, which led him to copy the small *Magdalen* of the latter, now at Dresden, several times, but with variations in the landscape. One of these, in which the landscape is by Allori, is at the Uffizi. The deep soft woodland is very delicately painted, with the leafage tender and graceful; in the distance is a lake with scarce distinguishable woodland shores, and a town; the effect is charming. Another, the *Infant Jesus asleep upon a Cross* (No. 1165), has a grave, finely-toned scene; in the background again there is a lake with a town upon its shores, an old wall catches faint light as it climbs a hill—the hills and sky all dim with twilight. These pictures, lovely in feeling, may perhaps have been painted during a fit of piety, unfortunately too short, when Allori abandoned for the time his profligate life and entered a fraternity. This man, of so much refined genius and conscientious workmanship, came to an early and ignominious end through the looseness of his morals.

<sup>1</sup> Meyer's *Künstler Lexikon*, i. 508.

IPPOLITO SCARSELLA or SCARSELLINO (1560-1621), the son of Sigismondo Scarsella, of Ferrara, where also his son was born, was apparently more under Venetian influence than that of the Carracci. He went early to Venice, and is said to have studied under Bassano, but especially to have taken the works of Veronese as his model. The landscape of his backgrounds, for which he had a certain reputation, is consequently rather of the decorative order. At the Borghese Gallery are two pictures in which the landscapes are clever but sketchy. In one of them, *Venus and Adonis*, the slight and frittered foliage shows a skilful hand, but everything is too much cut up with specks of light. The other, very similar in character, belongs to a sacred subject, *Christ going to Emmaus*. A third picture, formerly in the Sciarra collection,<sup>1</sup> of which the subject is *Women bathing*, shows pretty broken country with groups of trees gracefully put in; the whole rich and low in tone, free in touch, and perhaps more like Guido in treatment than any other master of the Carracci school.

GIOVANNI LANFRANCO (1581-1647), born at Parma on the same day as Domenichino at Bologna, educated by the Carracci at the latter city, following Annibale to Rome, and dying there, was one of the first of the "Machinisti," an appropriate title for those who covered walls with frescos which were only vast decorative works. Lanfranco began even as a boy to "scrawl his ideas" in charcoal upon walls rather than upon paper, an early ambition not of happy augury, when we think of the noble thoughts which a Raphael could express within the compass of a few inches. In the hands of such a painter one expects to find that landscape is only a subordinate and decorative accessory, and that it will be as little *felt* as the rest of the "Machinery" which went to the making of his pictures. In Naples, however, some of his oil-paintings on canvas show landscape at least effectively treated. In *St. Peter walking upon the Water*, a vigorous sketch, the boat with the figures of Christ and St. Peter are strongly relieved against an early morning light ("the fourth watch"), and behind an old town crowning a rock, a mass of cloud is rising. Again *Jesus in the Desert waited upon by Angels* has a landscape of dark crags with one light cloud shining behind foliage, reminiscent of both Gaspar Poussin and Salvator,—painters, it should be observed, already beginning to show what was

<sup>1</sup> Now in the possession of Philip Budworth, Esq., Greensted Hall, Essex.

in them,—and it may be that the rapid Lanfranco readily took a hint from an incoming style.

Another painter born at Parma, in the same year as Lanfranco, was SISTO BADALOCCHIO (1581-1647). He went to Rome as an assistant to Annibale Carracci, and became more known eventually as an engraver than a painter. But in the gallery of his native city are found some works of his, which attract attention by a style of landscape somewhat recalling that of Savoldo. His picture of *St. Francis receiving the Stigmata* (No. 138), though rather cold and hard, is vigorous, with a clever piece of woodland distance, in alternate light and shade beneath a sunny mass of cumulus cloud. It fails, however, in the foreground, which is hard and in heavy blocks. In that of *Andromeda* (131), cold, blue, and dark as it is, there is a mountainous shore in long perspective well brought in. These landscapes tend to support the statement that Badalocchio possessed "a lively imagination," while they cause one also to speculate upon the part he may have taken in the landscape of Guido, since he is said to have assisted both Guido and Domenichino in the frescos at San Gregorio.

BARTOLOMMEO SCHEDONE (died 1615) was a pupil in the school of the Carracci who died too early to accomplish much, so that his pictures are seldom met with. He deals with almost night effects. At Naples there is an impressive scene of this kind, and at Munich moonlight among trees is given in a manner which, though disagreeably "woolly," anticipates the effects of Rembrandt, who was but seven years old when Schedone died. Schedone, we are told, studied the works of Correggio, but he appears to have been much influenced, like so many others in those days, by the "Naturalisti" already mentioned, whose place in art now deserves attention.

The founder of this school, if such it can be called, MICHAEL ANGELO AMERIGHI DA CARAVAGGIO (1569-1609), so named from the small town in the Bergamo district where he was born, was from the first an outsider towards the art of his day. From Milan, where he had been helping his artisan father to prepare walls for fresco-painting, he fled, on account of a quarrel, not to Bologna, the nearest



seat of art-culture, but to Venice, and there became absorbed in the works of Giorgione, captivated at once by the subdued shadows and glowing tints of the great Venetian, for Caravaggio was a born colourist. Thence he betook himself to Rome, which he found in the possession of two opposing schools, the Mannerists and the Eclectics. With the impulse of a powerful self-taught nature he presently took up a position adverse to both; he left the trodden paths entirely and turned to common life, choosing for his subjects, sacred or otherwise, the life and manners of the people.

But it was common life under a very different aspect from that which attracted the Flemings—they saw the domestic and the humorous side; Caravaggio, an Italian, and a man of stormy passions, depicted the terrible and tragic, in which the actors and sufferers absorbed his imagination and shut out landscape from his view. Nor was landscape less excluded by his preference for startling light, contrasted with impenetrable blackness; and again by his adoption of life-size half-figures, as in the *Christ at Emmaus*, in the National Gallery. It is not surprising, then, that in a list of his works only one, a *Shepherd with his Dog*, at Wardour Castle, Wilts, is described as including a landscape.

Caravaggio, a man of the dagger and the dice, fled from city to city to escape the consequences of his violence, and at last, having been wounded at Naples in a fray, died in a boat while endeavouring to reach Rome. Hence he had no pupils nor proper school of his own, though he had numerous imitators who, especially those who established themselves at Venice, received the title of the "Tenebrosi" from their fondness for dark bituminous backgrounds. It was an appellation more appropriate than that of Naturalisti, for the "nature" which, following Caravaggio, they professed to imitate was but the animal nature of man, let loose in spasms of passion, or suffering ignoble miseries. But the indirect influence of Caravaggio was great, most of the adherents of the Carracci school were in greater or less degree attracted by his realism, his colour, his startling light and shade. Domenichino shows something of his influence; Guido and Guercino more; we have just quoted Schedone; Spada went into direct imitation; Ribera (or Spagnoletto), who was to Caravaggio more of a scholar than any one, established at Naples the school which sent forth Salvator Rosa, the master who applied the principles of the Naturalisti to landscape. It is difficult to say where and when the

vagrant spirit of Caravaggio ceased to influence art ; did not Rubens, Velasquez, Murillo, owe something to its promptings ? and through them how many more ?

We have spoken of Schedone as one who, though a pupil of the Carracci, was subject to the spell of Caravaggio. There was another, DOMENICO FETI, of about the same date (1589-1624), who was distinctly affected by him. Feti, however, had nothing to do with the Carracci. Born at Rome, and at first a disciple of that empty sentimentalist but good colourist, Cigoli, he lived chiefly at Mantua, and died at Venice. Thus he lived apart from the chief centres of art in those days, but in his works, not often met with, he shows the rich dramatic force, alike in conception, colouring, and light and shade, which might belong to a modern romanticist. We can only explain this anomaly by remembering that he was a contemporary of Caravaggio, and came from Rome, where the works of the latter were in high favour. Rare as Feti's pictures are, Dresden possesses quite a collection of them. Their subjects are chiefly taken from the Parables, which are treated in a very realistic manner, bits or suggestions of landscape being thrown in with the same vigour and originality as the rest. Distant landscape he does not affect, but gives a glimpse of sky, a scrambling vine, or a free piece of foliage, with vivid picturesqueness. Sometimes, as in a *St. Agnes*, he brings Tintoret to mind. At Berlin is a capital sketch of *Elijah in the Wilderness*, asleep under a tree, an angel with outspread wings bending over him ; it is much less crude than usual, for in a tendency to harshness and powerful opposition of colour he deserted the example of Caravaggio, while he followed him in force and in taking his figures and accessories from common nature. In the Louvre is an interesting picture by Feti entitled *La Vie Champêtre* ; besides his usual vigour, there is a Murillo look about the touch, and the landscape shows Rubens-like invention. Morning mists are rolling away upon a sloping upland, clouds are flying across the sky, below an early ploughman is at work. But there is a general air of haste and carelessness. Had not this painter died early, a victim to intemperance, he might have shown himself an original master in landscape, and perhaps also in portraiture, for there exists a striking portrait, of large size, said to be of himself, at Castle Howard, in the background of which he characteristically introduces a view of a gateway and some roofs of buildings.



GUERCINO (or BARBIERI DA CENTO, a village near Bologna, 1591-1666) was the last representative of the great school of the Carracci, but, like his friend Guido, was strongly attracted by the warmth of colour and depth of shadow characteristic of Caravaggio. Mrs. Jameson has defined his position "as standing in some respects between Guido and Caravaggio," and further says that he was "powerful in colour and striking effect," displaying "now and then deep feeling and pathos, but he is much more frequently heavy and commonplace, at times exaggerated, and even vulgar."<sup>1</sup> Fuseli declares that "he broke like a torrent over all academic rules, and, with an ungovernable itch of copying whatever lay in his way, sacrificed mind, form, and costume to effects of colour, fierceness of chiaroscuro, and intrepidity of hand." We are told in Lady Eastlake's edition of Kugler, however, that "in the early works of Guercino we find the same power and solidity, the same depth of shadow, as in those of Guido, but already tempered by a certain sweetness, and by an admirable chiaroscuro."

To our mind old De Piles gives the truest estimate of Guercino, in the fewest words, when he says "his genius was easy, but not elevated, neither were his thoughts fine." His works, indeed, appear to us but the dregs of all the great styles, some exhibiting a better mixture than others. Bologna, after Cento, was his accustomed place of residence, and Queen Christina of Sweden, passing through and visiting him, expressed the pleasure she felt at taking into her own "that hand which had painted one hundred and six altar-pieces, and one hundred and forty-four pictures for persons of the first rank in Europe, and had besides designed ten works of merit." We might leave the fame of Guercino to the keeping of this compliment, and take small notice of his position in landscape, but that he, more than any of the later scholars of the school, has a reputation in this branch of art; we are told, indeed, that in the practice of landscape-painting he acquired "a beautiful and rich style of colouring."<sup>2</sup> Let us here, then, resort to our note-book. The vigour which, under that "itch" of copying, Guercino learnt from Caravaggio belongs, as with Guido, to his earlier style, and to this period therefore probably must be assigned a *St. Jerome* in the Liechtenstein Gallery at Vienna, which possesses a powerful dark-blue twilight landscape, harsh but forcible, dark towers and trees standing out against an horizon glimmer. So also in the landscape of the *Magdalen and Angels* at the

<sup>1</sup> *Private Picture Galleries*, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup> Kugler, p. 583.

Vatican, made up of intensely harsh blues and browns, there is a spark of feeling in the gleam that illuminates the darkness, and reveals a something on the horizon; all the rest is coarse, if not brutal; that fatal craze of imitation here led him too far. After this he adopted a style compounded of the Roman, Venetian, and Bolognese schools, and the result is more satisfactory. At Bologna the *St. Bruno in the Desert* shows the extreme of generalisation in landscape, rocks of a quite modern suggestive type—the whole thrown in broadly yet dimly—"scumbled" into softness; there is no vividness of definition, no glow, but hazy masses cleverly managed. To the same general period also probably belongs the *Prodigal Son* at Panshanger. The landscape has a grave, solid, simple effect. It consists of little more than a single arched bridge and an old town gateway, with a stately cypress and broad dark masses of foliage. At the Bridgewater Gallery the *David and Abigail*, painted at the maturity of his powers, has an exceedingly poor landscape; commonplace forms are smudged in, as it were; and if there be a dark-blue hill in the distance, it only shows how completely all the poetry may be left out. Of nearly the same sort is the *Tancred and Erminia* at Castle Howard; the landscape is all soft "muggy" gloom.

Yet, as Mrs. Jameson says, Guercino is sometimes exceptionally poetic, and then that occasional mood is reflected in his landscape. At the Corsini Palace, in the *Woman of Samaria*, a small picture, there is a really solemn piece of landscape;—a low hill is lost in obscurity on one side, while light breaks from behind it on the other. In the Colonna collection also, *Tobit and the Angel* possesses a suggestive piece of landscape, with a castle or church tipped with light. Yet, in the hands of a ready man with plenty of fine works of art around him, these instances may be held to indicate cleverness rather than real feeling.

This also is the impression produced by Guercino's numerous landscape-drawings, to which, no doubt, his reputation as a master in landscape is greatly due. Rapidly thrown off in pen and bistre, they show in composition an abundantly practised hand, and an eye for every picturesque detail to be found in tufted ruins, hoary towers, broken arches, gracefully-bending trees, and the toss of foliage; but they are little more than hasty scribbles, and show no higher conception of landscape than as a means of picturesque suggestion. There is a marked absence of sky or cloud; where the

FIG. 138.—FROM AN ENGRAVING, AFTER A DRAWING BY GUERCINO.

latter is introduced, it is in the feeblest manner, and this agrees with the treatment in his pictures, where clouds are generally formless nothings. No true master in landscape ever neglects the wealth of cloud grandeur and of sky pathos. On the other hand, Guercino shows great skill and "go" in the figures with which he enlivens his scenery, but for this only cleverness is required. Turning from his works to his life, we gladly acknowledge a happy disposition and pure morals. The popularity of his landscape-drawings is shown by the number of engravings executed from them; one of these is rendered on a reduced scale in Fig. 133. It is by no means so picturesque a subject as many, but was better adapted for the process of reduction.

The Carracci school ends with Guercino. It had always lived upon the brains of greater men, but it had made skilful use of them, and given a scientific precision to art, of which landscape had the benefit, such as it was. In particular, it was skilful in composition, in handling masses of shadow, and in picturesque detail; but of atmosphere there is none, and of colour very little. The eye wearies of the browns and purples and bald blues. In the rise of the Naturalisti there is new hope, since they looked at nature with a new purpose; but we must wait for the master who, rambling in the wilds of Southern Italy, gives the life of bandits among the rocks, and of fishermen on the beach, before this influence upon landscape is fully shown.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### ITALIANISED FLEMINGS AND GERMANS OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

Mabuse . . . . .	1470 ?-1532.	Pieter Brueghel . . . . .	1520 ?-1569.
Bernhard van Orley . . . . .	1488-90 ?-1542.	Jan Brueghel . . . . .	1568-1625.
Lucas van Leyden . . . . .	1494-1533.	Jodocus Momper . . . . .	-1634-5 ?
Jan Schoreel . . . . .	1495-1562.	Roelandt Savery . . . . .	1576-1639.
Lucas Gassel . . . . .	1550 ?-	David Vinckebooms . . . . .	1578-1629.
J. Cornelis Vermeyen . . . . .	1500-1559.	Lucas van Valkenburg . . . . .	-1625.
Martin de Vos . . . . .	1531-1603.	Pieter Lastmann . . . . .	1580 ?-1649 ?
Abraham Bloemart . . . . .	1565-1658 ?	Bartholomew de Bruyn . . . . .	-1556.
Paul Bril . . . . .	1556-1626.	Adam Elsheimer . . . . .	1578-1620 ?

IN completing the narrative of the Carracci school of painters we were carried, so far as actual date is concerned, beyond the limits of our subject, since Guercino, the last of that school, died in 1666, when Claude, born in 1600, was far beyond mid-life, and Salvator, only fifteen years younger, had already been painting some five-and-twenty years. Nevertheless, if the influence of that famous school upon landscape was to be fully illustrated, it was necessary to notice what there is of landscape in the works of its most noted scholars, Guido and Guercino; and as to some extent the lives of these last run parallel with those of the two great masters and founders of landscape proper, those masters must certainly have been greatly indebted to the acknowledged leaders of art in their day.

But even now it is scarcely competent to us to make an end of our task. There was always going on, as we have seen, an interchange between northern and southern art in regard to landscape. Beginning in Flanders, we had soon to pass into Italy, thence to recross the Alps to Germany, only to return again to Italian soil by way of the Venetian provinces. And now if we would fairly complete our view of landscape in art before Claude and Salvator, we must turn once again to the original home of landscape, and show how, more or less under Italian influences, a native school of landscape

was developed—a school which, as we have already had occasion to note, exercised in some measure its old function of teaching landscape to the Italians.

Yet, as with one superb exception, the men of whom we shall have to speak were but of secondary account in art, as their works mostly occupy but an intermediate position, and are generally more curious than interesting, we may be excused if some are treated rather cursorily.

In the eighth chapter we carried the story of Flemish landscape as far as Mostaert, and it was a contemporary of that painter, JAN VAN MABUSE (1470?–1532), born, as it is believed, at Maubeuge on the Sambre the same year that saw Mostaert's birth at Haarlem, in whom can be first distinctly traced an Italian influence mingling with the native Gothic of Flanders. Visiting Italy in middle life, he was at Rome in 1508, and was afterwards associated with the same Jacopo di Barbaris, the Venetian, who came to Nuremberg, charming Dürer with his Venetian style, and instructing Kulmbach in art. From the Italians Mabuse learnt to paint "nudities," though not very successfully as to drawing, but he did not learn anything that might be of service to his landscape. Here his Flemish realism as well as Flemish colour prevailed even when, as in his picture of the *Madonna and Child* at Berlin (616), he was under the influence of Solario the Lombard painter.

In BERNHARD VAN ORLEY (1488-90?–1542) we have another Italianiser, and one who imbibed Italian feeling to more purpose than Mabuse; this may be seen where he introduces landscape. In the *Patience of Job*, a triptych at Brussels, his style in this respect may be compared with that of Mostaert in the same gallery. There is a freer touch, a richer sort of distance, more air and colour in the woods, and soft low luminous hills, while towers on a height stand darkly blue against a warm twilight. All this tells of Italy; but a northern imagination is betrayed in the scene of night or storm, where rocks are piled up ghastly pale against the cloudy wrack; and this quality appears also, we may judge, in a picture of the *Trinity* at Lübeck, where, illustrating the apocalyptic vision, shipwrecks are seen along a winding coast, and a burning mountain is depicted cast into the sea.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This picture is attributed by Lord Lindsay to Altdorfer, but is stated by Dr. Julius Meyer of Berlin to be the work of Van Orley. I have not myself seen it.

It was the fortune of a little Dutchman from Leyden, LUCAS VAN LEYDEN (1494–1533), to feast at his table more than one famous painter. Fond of display, and making a gallant progress in a decked boat of his own along the Dutch and Flemish canals, he visited Middleburgh, and forthwith invited Mabuse and four other painters to dine with him. Another time, being at Antwerp, Lucas hospitably entertained Albrecht Dürer himself, then on his famous Netherland journey. They were both of too sincere a nature for other than a noble rivalry of endeavour, but Lucas, although the younger by twenty years, had already, following Dürer in the use of the burin, established a high reputation. It is indeed the German rather than the Flemish influence that may be traced in the works of Lucas. His master of early years at Leyden, Engelbrechtsen, shows the same impulse. Lord Lindsay praises the colouring and aerial perspective of this painter, who was certainly a painstaking draughtsman, but Lucas was perhaps most indebted to him for a direction towards the genre treatment of subjects, and even to the adoption of scenes of outdoor common life, which made his engravings popular. This suited his realistic style, and naturally was associated with more or less of landscape.

We may speak of these engraved works first; they constitute indeed his chief claim to our notice. With Dürer-like care, Lucas drew trunks of trees, facets of rock, the walls and turrets of buildings, excelling especially in the latter, for the originals were constantly before his eyes. In his illustration of *Virgil let down in a Basket from a Window* the street-corner is charmingly rendered; and a delightfully picturesque little scene outside an old town-wall where, amongst bowery trees, a stream issues from under the low arch of a bridge, occurs in his plate of *Susanna and the Elders*. Here Lucas is at home, and shows himself the forerunner of Dutch art. It is otherwise with mountains; probably he never saw a mountain, though he might be acquainted with the hilly scenery of the upper Meuse. In his mountains there is a poverty and a want of character which lead one to suspect that he saw them through other eyes than his own; but he expresses a widespread distance well, so far as that can be done with delicate outlining, and occasionally, as in a *Return of the Prodigal*, there is a pretty little sort of Rhine-side combination of trees and houses. But, and especially in his earlier plates, he fails in trees, which stand stiff and straight, the near ones with formal individual leafage, the further showing

remarkably that peculiar flaky kind of foliage which he seems to have bequeathed to the Brueghels and many others; while the meagreness and monotony in the bare boughs he is rather fond of introducing is conspicuous. He seldom gives any sky, a pregnant indication, and only in his later works appear suggestions of tone and shadow. In all these matters the superb superiority of Dürer asserts itself. In that rich inventiveness, that keen poetic perception, that hint of infinitude and of wondrousness conveyed in intricate and delicate detail, in which Dürer's plates excel, Lucas cannot approach him—showing inferiority still more in his woodcuts, which fail altogether of the greater master's bold generalisation and vigorous light and shade.

Yet Lucas was early known across the Alps for his landscapes, as one very curious fact declares. Marc Antonio engraved two of Michael Angelo's figures in the cartoon of the battle of Pisa, and took it into his head to account for their hasty exit from the water, by indicating the approach of an enemy through a wood in the middle distance; but for this wood, and indeed the whole of his background, he helped himself out of Lucas's early plate of the murder of the monk Sergius, making only one improvement in the rectified perspective of a barn!

The oil technic of the Van Eycks, which had already, as we have seen, lost its brilliancy among most Flemish artists, did not, it appears, reach Leyden till the days of Engelbrechtsen, and Lucas used it but partially; besides engravings, he made many drawings in water-colour, of which few that are genuine have survived. As to his oil-pictures Lord Lindsay holds that aërial perspective owed much to him, and that "distance as imitable by colour was with him a constant object of experiment and practice." This agrees with the aërial treatment of distance in his engravings, and the few pictures available for comment support the assertion. His picture at Berlin of *St. Jerome* (584), which may have been painted as early as 1516, has a bit of careful smooth landscape made up of meadows, trees, and a chateau, all nice in colour, and under a smooth pink sky, but its archaic simplicity reveals the lack of poetical feeling. A picture in the Liechtenstein Gallery, the *Hermits, Anthony and Hilarion in the Desert*, appears to have been painted earlier still, for Lucas was astonishingly precocious. The background here "has a delicately worked-out landscape, showing a rocky grotto with other anchorites." A triptych at the Antwerp Museum attributed to



Lucas<sup>1</sup> is also of this archaic character. It contains exquisitely delicate landscapes with faint distances; but towers and cottages are so heaped together—mountains, rocks, trees, are so crowded in—that there is no unity of effect, only innumerable charming little episodes of scenery. Though illuminated by no sunlight the colouring is warm, and the faint distances fairly justify Lord Lindsay's praise of his aerial perspective. On the other hand, another Antwerp picture (207) contains two extensive landscapes, cold, gray, and airless, but there are some large masses of white cloud unlike to Lucas's often vacant skies. The two wings of his great picture at Leyden of the *Last Judgment* show the Apostles Peter and Paul seated in landscapes, but of these the writer has no information.

There is no hint of Lucas having travelled farther than canals would take him; nevertheless, the influence of the Italian Renaissance reached him towards the end of his short life, and, as in the case of Mabuse, obscured much of his original genius. This influence is believed to date from about the year 1529, but, as in his picture of the *Virgin and the Magdalen* at Munich (743), bearing date 1522, the former sits in a superb Renaissance chair, it was probably showing itself earlier. The landscape here is cold in colour, but contains an excellent study of rock and leafage.

So far Lord Lindsay's high opinion scarcely seems to be supported. The works of Lucas are inevitably compared with those of his great German contemporary, and the inferiority of his landscapes in feeling, delicacy, and power to those of Dürer cannot be questioned.

JAN SCHOREEL (1495-1562) was another Hollander. The Dutch were, indeed, now beginning to show that genius for art which was to create a "Dutch School." Schoreel was a scholar of Mabuse; but, like some of the great Italians, he was an ecclesiastic as well as an artist. In the former character he visited Rome, and travelled even as far as Palestine, where he is said to have made drawings of sacred scenes on the banks of the Jordan. He returned to live and die Canon of Utrecht, and is generally credited with being the first to impregnate the art of Holland with that of Italy. Lord Lindsay,

<sup>1</sup> The description of this in the catalogue does not agree with Dr. Waagen's account of what he considers the earliest of Lucas's extant paintings—an altar-piece with wings—in this Museum, which has in the centre an enthroned Madonna with four angels, and in the wings St. George and the Dragon, and St. Christopher. Yet I found no other triptych than that referred to in the text. No. 208.

however, calls him the link between Van Eyck and Gerard Dow, and says that in landscape he excels, adding that his "distant hills and air-tints are beautiful." This again does not agree with our recollection of several of his reputed pictures. The *Holy Family resting near a Fountain*, of the National Gallery, has indeed a mountainous landscape, full of peaks, none of which are unreal, but a faint glow on the horizon is the only illumination of the still sky over a dark-blue distance. There is no poetry, only cold care of every detail; certainly it does not seem that he made any use of his studies in the Holy Land for a subject to which they would have been so appropriate; on the contrary, a castle on a crag—a feature for which the Netherland painters had always a great fancy—was probably derived from the scenery of the Meuse, while intended to represent Jerusalem.

At Antwerp a *Crucifixion*, attributed to Schoreel, has neither light nor air, nor yet the darkness; while, again, a Flemish castle is set upon a crag. All we can detect in these two pictures is a feeling for the severe and solemn in landscape; there is no trace of the Van Eyck splendour—rather might we guess at a German origin, and indeed Schoreel is said to have studied under Dürer as well as under Mabuse. In the Ryks collection, Amsterdam, the picture of a seated woman (The Magdalen?) with a vase has a quiet Italian face and figure, and a gray daylight landscape, in which fantastic rocks appear an incongruous feature. This, however, is a characteristic noticed by Lord Lindsay, who speaks of Schoreel's "top-heavy, tower-topped crags, frequently pierced with fissures." Rocks of this sort, never found in Dürer, belong more to the later Flemings than to any other school (we have seen them in Matsys Fig. 64); the frequent air of gloom in Schoreel we should attribute to the Dürer influence, while the gray tints may be Ferrarese.<sup>1</sup>

It was, however, in LUCAS GASSEL, an Antwerper (lived about the middle of the sixteenth century), that the tasteless landscape of fantastic rock reached perhaps its lowest depths. Kugler speaks of him as imitating Patenier in this, and a picture in the Belvedere, Vienna, a *Judith and Tamar*, to which he refers, more than bears out the assertion. It is gray and muddled in tint, is full of objects

<sup>1</sup> When I was at Utrecht the Schoreel pictures, to my great disappointment, were covered up by a modern exhibition, and I unfortunately failed to see those painted in tempera for the church of Warmenhuizen, near Alkmaar.

like Dutch toys, and its impossible mountains have great holes in them to make them more impossible.

If we mention JAN CORNELIS VERMEYEN, another Dutchman (1500-1559), it is only because it is said by Kugler "that various landscapes by him, reported of great beauty, perished in the destruction of the Prado, at Madrid, by fire in 1608." Yet, as Vermeyen chiefly distinguished himself by drawings illustrating the siege of Tunis, to which he accompanied the Emperor Charles V. in order that pictures and tapestries might be executed from them, we may question whether the beauty of these landscapes was of any high order.

MARTIN DE VOS (1531-1603), a Fleming, born at Antwerp, lived much in Italy, especially at Venice, where he acted as assistant to Tintoretto; and, if he were really employed by that great master "to paint the landscapes of his pictures," we have a fact of the greatest interest. But surely Tintoretto's stormy genius has impressed itself too vividly upon his landscapes to allow us to accept such a statement! There is some indication, however, that De Vos himself profited by the association, since Kugler refers to a double picture by him in the Berlin Museum, in which the dramatic treatment of the two incidents, *Christ walking on the Sea*, and *Jonah cast out of the Ship*, together with the "brilliant sunrise effect" introduced, "seem to herald the coming of such a master as Rubens."<sup>1</sup>

ABRAHAM BLOEMART (1565-1658?), born at Gorcum, but who lived chiefly at Utrecht, is one of this wearisome list of mediocre men, filling up an interval in Holland and Flanders till the tide of genius flowed again. He lived, however, to see that tide in full volume, for, though born ten years earlier than Rubens, he outlived that great genius, while even Rembrandt was thirty-seven years old when Bloemart ended his long life. Bloemart's later works show that he was not uninfluenced by the flood of art-power that had risen around him, but to which period a cold study of trees—careful in branch and leafage—in the Liechtenstein Gallery belongs, we cannot say. A clever piece of Italian picturesque in the gallery at Rotterdam is assigned to him, and Pilkington says that he made

<sup>1</sup> These pictures are now apparently withdrawn, as their numbers are omitted from the catalogue. I never saw them myself.

"nature his model . . . particularly for landscape and cattle, in which he excelled."

If not a man of genius, PAUL or PAUWEL BRIL (1556-1626) was a man of note, and certainly of some importance in the history of landscape-art. Yet it is difficult to discover in the quality of his work a sufficient cause for Bril's celebrity. Much of it was due, we should suppose, to his living all his days at Rome, the great centre of the art-world, to an immense industry, and, more than all, to his association with the most distinguished artists of his time, who all found his ready skill in landscape of use to them. He could cover any amount of wall-space with landscape at command, he could deftly put in background, he could supply the cabinets of connoisseurs with landscape subjects *ad libitum*. Thus he was fertile in ideas, and in one idea is held to have led the way for others. He was the first (says Kugler) "to introduce a certain unity of light in his pictures"; by this he often accomplished striking effects.

Paul Bril was born at Antwerp and, we are told, began with painting designs upon the cases of harpsichords, but hearing of the success of his brother Matthew at Rome, who was furnishing the Vatican with landscapes, he made his way there on foot, was kindly received, and then, stimulated by the sight of so much art, and struck particularly, it is said, by the works of Titian, he soon surpassed his brother, to whose place and pension as landscape-painter to the Pope he succeeded on Matthew's death in 1584. We cannot but be struck with these indications that landscape had attained great popularity at Rome. Art talent, decaying amidst its old triumphs, was in truth taking this new direction, and it was the northerners who showed the way.

Yet Italy was still the instructor of these wanderers from the verdant north. Would Bril have understood the importance of unity of light and generalisation of effect but for Italian genius? Was not this the great lesson he learnt from Titian, as, in cast of light and shade, the Carracci would be his masters? He had some real apprehension of the meaning of landscape, and depicted the natural scene in preference to the artificial and ornamental.

The Berlin Gallery perhaps shows Bril at his best. In No. 729 are Roman ruins, with intense blue behind them, but themselves illuminated by a bright light streaming from behind large trees. The brown foreground is conventional enough; the one *idea* is the

morning ray upon the ruins, among which may be recognised the columns of the Forum. Yet he must needs place these fine objects in the midst of a fancy landscape, half Italian and half Flemish in its trees and houses. Better than this is a very pleasing miniature (it seems as if he had very much set the fashion of small size for landscape), in which there are again Roman ruins under breaking rays of sunshine. He goes farther afield in 714, *A Chamois Hunt* at early morning, among fine dark masses of crag. If we did not know that Salvator, before he came to Rome, had found out wild

FIG. 134.—LANDSCAPE BY P. BRIL, BERLIN.

nature for himself, we might fancy him indebted to Bril. But the picture of most fame at Berlin, and which is clearly an anticipation of Claude, is 744. In this coast-scene vapoury clouds scud fast to land, before the morning brightness that bursts to seaward, and lights up object after object on the rocky shore. All the lines of the composition point towards the rising sun hidden by a near dark bluff, off which a vessel lies at anchor. We doubt whether there is anything exactly like this in previous art, and we may fairly believe that to their Flemish precursor both Claude and Salvator owed more than a hint of what might be done with sunshine on the sea. (Fig 134.)

At the Louvre, Bril is not seen to advantage. The heavy foliage

and heavy greens, the hardness and want of air, repel one from his pictures. At Turin he is scarcely more fortunate, for though there is one really good bit composed of fir trees and rocky banks, upon which a single opening in the clouds sheds watery light, most of his pictures are smooth and cold, with stiff metallic-looking trees.

At Milan we have far better work. In 383 (Brera) subject and colouring alike suggest Gaspar Poussin. Bril is always at his best on a small scale, and in 380 (Brera) there is a capital little view of a red ruin with an archway, a spray of foliage feathering from a wall, sunbeams striking from a cloud in the distance, the whole charmingly picturesque.

At Rome the Borghese Gallery has many Brils with many clever effects. In one there is strong moonlight upon a romantic scene; in another a conflict of cloud and wind and stormy light upon a sea-coast. In yet another, ruins upon a bridge are lit up with powerful effect by a passing gleam. Remembering all these instances of landscape cleverness, our estimate of Bril's merits appears scarcely just, but it would seem more so, were we to recount numerous works in the style of the Louvre pictures to be found in Continental galleries. One gets heartily tired of pictures with dark hot foregrounds, harsh contrasts, disagreeable colour, though sometimes a candid examination discloses a really poetical idea. One such picture, if memory serves, is at Petworth, where, amidst soft tones of distance, the suggestion of an infinitude of objects redeems a scene otherwise cold and dark.

For certainly Bril was somewhat colour-blind,—a grievous deficiency for him who has to do with the tints of earth and sky. It was light and shade, not colour, that attracted him, carrying out in this respect the teaching of the Carracci, with whom he was so intimate. If he preferred the light of morning, it was not, like Cima, for its exquisite purity, but for the sharpness of its chiaroscuro, for he was a man of more learning than feeling.

The names of two well-known landscape painters upon whom the Italian influence was very small, now invite notice—PIETER BRUEGHEL the elder (1520 ?—1569), and his son JAN (or VELVET) BRUEGHEL (1568—1625). The writer must confess to having felt an extreme distaste for the very name of Brueghel, but his distaste was exchanged for a sort of amused admiration as he studied the works

of father and son—especially those of the latter. It is certain they were very highly prized in their time.

To begin with the father. Pieter, born at the village of Brueghel, near Breda, about half-way between Antwerp and Rotterdam, was, from the nature of his subjects, called Peasant Brueghel, a title which naturally commends him to our attention. Yet it was not the peasant in relation to nature, but the peasant in relation to life—the peasant in his “sports, dances, weddings, and drunken quarrels”—that he was fond of depicting. Pieter Brueghel takes a more important place in the history of genre-painting than in that of landscape-art.

Yet he was not indifferent to landscape, especially of the wilder sort, very unlike that of his native country. But in travelling to Italy he passed through Tyrol and Friuli, making many sketches as he went along—studying landscape, therefore, in a very different school from that of the Italian masters, from whom he does not seem to have imbibed much. He was a man, so far, of distinct individuality; nor can we deny that he shows traces of poetic feeling when he deals, not with life, but with nature—a feeling we should not expect in the coarse humorist he often is.

*The Murder of the Innocents*, Vienna, is the picture which drew from Sir Joshua Reynolds the remark, that “old Brueghel was totally ignorant of all the mechanical art of making a picture; but there is here a great quantity of thinking, a representation of variety of distress enough for twenty modern pictures.” Sir Joshua does not speak of the landscape, but it is an instance of Brueghel’s “thinking” that he puts that tragedy amidst a carefully-painted snow-scene, in which every detail is faithfully given—the snow-capped pollards, the footsteps in the partially-melted smudgy snow beneath. That with him Bethlehem is simply a Dutch village is not surprising. In *Christ bearing the Cross* (Belvedere), this “thinking” is imaginative; not only [is there an enormous multitude, the sea of faces lit up with every variety of expression, but immense distance is suggested, while the dark clouds that rise behind the sandy dune, which stands for Calvary, are full of lurid portent. Sir Joshua, no doubt, held the high horizon to be a mark of “ignorance”; but it suited Pieter’s idea of a vast and crowded scene. There is the same subject at Berlin (721). In a landscape at Vienna, with all its harshness, there is real vigour and originality in the way in which the tempest rises in the distance, and a sunburst strikes upon the



sandy shore of a stream.<sup>1</sup> At Rotterdam, however, instead of any poetical idea, a landscape attributed to Pieter is full of extravagant porcelain blues in trees and water, and of red browns in the boat and houses.

Of "Peasant" Brueghel's eldest son, PIETER or "HELL" BRUEGHEL, we need not speak, since the wild and horrible subjects which gave him his sobriquet are fortunately not within the scope of landscape.

But JAN BRUEGHEL, whose velvet coat is commemorated in his title of "Velvet" Brueghel, disported himself in so many green and flowery glades, and was so admired for this kind of landscape—for even Rubens sought his aid—that we must needs take him seriously in hand. But it is difficult to take this lively genius seriously when the brilliant miniature work that goes by his name first catches the eye. That he was originally a fruit and flower painter explains the peculiar brilliance, but he should not have spread the rare jewel-tints of nature at large over sober landscape. He has been called "the painter of Zoological gardens," and had they existed in his time he would have done them excellently, especially elaborating the exotics and fruits proper to a parrot-house.

For there are miracles of execution among Velvet Brueghel's miniatures, as we may call them, whatever their size. His crowded foregrounds, his fantastic blue distances full of marvellous detail, remind one of the most highly-finished manuscript-art. Take for example the *Temptation in the Wilderness*, of the Belvedere, Vienna. As for the wilderness, Jan Brueghel's notion of it is that of a blooming confusion of vegetation, with charming detail of flowers and leaves, and a vast distance of blueness. Perhaps he confused his subject with the scene of the first Temptation; for, with singular insensibility to the solemn significance of that with which he professes to deal, the picture is full of "funny" points, though not less of clever points—as in the water flowing over a fallen trunk, in the corrugated bark of a tree, in the yellow iris which flaunts in a foreground where, it must be admitted, the rich tones are in delicious harmony.

So, as one examines picture after picture in detail, these harmonies of colour, these graces of touch—nay, occasional tendernesses of tint—surprise one with their beauty. There are even some landscape

<sup>1</sup> I have unfortunately lost the reference, but suppose this description to refer to the *Autumn* described by Kugler as "a landscape of much poetry."



effects of exceeding charm. In No. 734, at Dresden, surprising as such a comparison may be, nothing in Turner could be better than the wandering gleam upon a scattered woodside, with a chateau faintly seen against the blue murk. In a *View in Holland*, again, (728), there is wonderful delicacy and grace in the flitting watery lights; though, as a picture, it is ruined by the vivid blues of sky and cloud. In the *Windmill on a Hill*, however (No. 747), so far as the landscape is concerned, Jan Brueghel has fallen into a chastened mood. An admirable simplicity pervades the whole scene of sober gray, some lonely huts shelter under a bluff, and the tall dark windmill rises in stately dignity against the sombre sky, where only a faint light lies along the distance. But then upon this quiet bit of Old Holland enter some gay little figures dressed in red and blue, transforming the whole into a scene on the stage! It is but fair to record where we can the merits of this painter, so we may point to another of the Dresden pictures (743), in which he gives a winter scene, poor in touch, but with very good suggestion of a wood of slender trees out of which one looks upon a snow-encumbered village, all wrapt in a gray whiteness. But if this winter scene wins our admiration, what shall we say to an *Autumn* at Brussels, without a touch of autumn tint, all green flakes of foliage, and the only indications of the season are a quantity of fruit scattered about and a dead hare in the foreground!

The Cassel Gallery has several Brueghels. No. 156 is very clever, infinitely delicate in finish, and, if one must denounce its abominable blues and greens, one may admit that the rushing stream, with its watching heron, and the distant airy foliage touched with light, make some amends. An evening effect (No. 157) is a rich piece of colour and of wonderful finish.

Jan Brueghel, it is said, was led to take up landscape during a visit to Italy, and in the Colonna Palace a fine composition, with a broken foreground, rocks and goats, trees, ruins, and a great valley vista beyond, affords evidence of his having been for a time under Italian influence. But his style was only fitted for miniature dimensions; in larger pieces, as in the famous *Paradise*, at the Hague, painted in conjunction with Rubens, we have only leaves, oranges, flowers, and abundance of that flaky foliage which may perhaps be traced to Lucas van Leyden's engravings.

Jan Brueghel's work, notwithstanding much captivating detail, is in its general character absolutely unreal. There is no such gay





prettiness when nature arranges her landscape effects. She is neither prodigal of vivid colours, nor makes foliage glitter as with metallic lustre. We may remember, however, in extenuation, first, that the vivid blues may to some extent result from colour change; and secondly, that Brueghel may have been led astray by the fruit and flower painting of his earlier years. In one instance, where Momper is said to have assisted Brueghel (Cassel, No. 104), his mistakes appear to have been corrected by the more experienced landscape-painter. Engravings from J. Brueghel's works reveal more of his merits than of his defects, which lie so much in the colouring. Fig. 135 illustrates his delicacy of detail and abundant perception of the picturesque.

The JOSSE or JODOCUS MOMPER just mentioned (died 1634-5?), a native of Antwerp, really knew something about landscape. He had ideas, was ready in expressing them, and preferred wild scenes; but he was withal harsh, crude, and conventional in execution. At Vienna is a scene on the St. Gothard (Belvedere, 72), a fine composition, with driving clouds, and soaring rocks which, however, in the foreground become unstudied and careless. At Dresden (2422) is a mountainous landscape, very conventional in its hot brown foreground, but showing a vast blue distance flecked with sunny gleams; there are air and light in this picture, which Jan Brueghel, who put in the figures, could not have given. Several other landscapes by Momper at Dresden, along with a certain power of drawing, composition, and chiaroscuro, are sadly crude and raw in colour. At Berlin he has a singularly forcible sketch of an Alpine scene; it is true that, with a very commonplace idea of effect, brown, green, and yellow crags contrast with a verdigris-blue middle-distance, and that golden or pale violet hills rise behind; still it conveys something of the romance of an Alpine landscape—a romance which it is surprising to find, almost a generation earlier than Salvator, striking the imagination of northern artists.

Yet perhaps ROELANDT SAVERY, a native of Courtray (1576-1639), became distinguished as a painter of the wild scenery of the Tyrol, more through the taste of the Emperor Rudolf, in whose service he was, than his own. At any rate it was the Emperor who sent him there for the purpose of study, and kept him at it for two years. Considering the silence of contemporary literature upon such

subjects, this action of the Emperor is remarkable, and would lead us to suppose that it was sport and not literature (though possibly science) that first appreciated the beauty of the Alps.

As for Roelandt, he was the son of a man who laboriously painted animals and landscape, and he also took to animal-painting at first, so that, apart from the accident of the Emperor's fancy, he was scarcely likely to strike out so peculiar a line for himself; nor did he treat it with the dash and inspiration of Momper, but with the miniature workmanship and blue-and-green colouring of Brueghel, so that the result is often more curious than admirable. Roelandt lived, while in the Emperor's service, at Prague, and Vienna possesses most of his works.

These vary considerably in merit. In No. 24, for instance, we are repelled by the Brueghel type of finish and colour, while we are charmed with much excellent rendering of detail, as in an old pine-trunk dripping with moss. A characteristic defect appears in the two men who are sawing timber—they are as gay as peacocks; but in such incidents of forest life—in the woodmen at work, the pack-men with their loads, and the fir-woods—we thoroughly recognise Tyrol. No. 66, again, is all blues and greens; but there is imagination almost of the "Martin" sort in a vision of towers, walls, and peaks, half seen in a misty distance. The showy Tyrolese figures may be excused if it was a fête-day, which perhaps it was, since a woman has laid out fruit upon a cloth for wayfarers. No. 68 gives us, in a timber shoot and sluice, a genuine bit of Tyrol; the stream issues from a fir-forest, and falls over crags full of minute and faithful study.

Far the best of the Vienna pictures, however, is a secluded forest-scene; there is only a single far-off figure, unsuspected by the solitary heron, standing sentinel by the stem of a fallen tree, the rabbit, and the woodpecker, that make up all the life. The lights and shades strike in with excellent effect; allowing for some vivid blues, the colouring is harmonious, with much tenderness of gradation; a few red autumnal leaves enrich the foreground; and a distant building on a crag completes a subject full of landscape feeling and local truth.

Dresden has several of Savery's pictures, but they are too much in the style of Brueghel. Both here and at Vienna we find traces of Savery's original bent towards animal-painting. Yet we may certainly honour him as a genuine student of Alpine nature. It is said that he brought away from Tyrol a vast number of drawings

made on the spot; and if his figures are foolishly gay, he, like Brueghel, only followed the example set him by renowned Italians—Annibale and Domenichino. The sober figure tints of Teniers were more than a generation later.

DAVID VINCKEBOOMS (1578-1629), a Fleming of Mechlin, took to the same sort of peasant subject as the elder Brueghel, and followed him also in depicting vast and crowded scenes; as in *Christ bearing His Cross*, a picture in the Belvedere Gallery, where the landscape, of much delicacy in detail, fades away through fainter and fainter tints into a far-away misty light. But Dresden has works by which we may better estimate the ability of Vinckebooms in landscape. He seems to have been specially interested in forest scenery, which, if somewhat in the manner of Jan Brueghel, is treated with more sombre feeling, as in a bandit scene (883) in the midst of a dense forest, but with evidence of imaginative power, there is the drawback of hot and heavy colour.

A man of far more genius was LUCAS VAN VALKENBURG, also a Mechliner, but of somewhat earlier date than Vinckebooms. (Died 1625.) Like Savery, he was tempted into Austria, and while many of his subjects illustrate peasant or soldier life, it is the scenery of that mountain land which takes prominent possession of his art. It is not, however, the landscape of Tyrol, but rather the hilly region of Upper Austria, with its impressive outlooks upon the wide valley of the Danube, that we find in his pictures. Valkenburg lived indeed at Linz in the service of the Grand Duke Mathias, afterwards emperor. One of these distances may appear in a picture of the Liechtenstein collection (No. 840), but it is spoilt by the all-pervading Brueghelism of the period.

Valkenburg is more himself at the Belvedere, where, in a forest scene near Linz, the dark cool woodland is given with keen and accurate perception, and is full of poetic feeling, as witness the reflections in the darksome water of the pool, and the wonderful illumination, amidst the shades, of the face of a man fishing, none other than the Grand Duke himself, who here commemorates his love for woodland solitude. This picture was painted in 1590. Another, probably from the same neighbourhood, shows from amidst dark green foliage a view of vast extent, with a city that may be Linz. But for the scenery of the most remarkable "Valkenburg"

in the collection we must repair to the mining districts of Styria or Carinthia. In this, Valkenburg has pictured a man flying for his life from robbers down a rocky path, amidst an impossible congregation of wild mountains, that shut out all but a streak of plain in the distance. A deep Cimmerian stream, a waterfall, and a smelting furnace add unwonted verisimilitude as well as romantic effect. No doubt there is much heavy, leaden-hued colour in Valkenburg's pictures, but, where the subject allows, there is a sense of the dignity and awe-inspiring character of a mountain region.

Perhaps a more interesting name than any we have encountered since Lucas van Leyden is that of another Dutchman, PIETER LASTMANN (1580 ?-1649 ?), who was born, and mostly lived, at Haarlem. Yet the interest is due less to himself than to his scholar, for this was none other than Rembrandt, in whose works appear certain Lastmann characteristics, illumined by his own transcendent genius. These qualities are shown in some of Lastmann's landscapes. At the Liechtenstein Gallery, No. 520, described only as *A Landscape*, displays very fine feeling. The one gleam that falls upon the woman, the melancholy sea, the weeping sky, the broken bridge, the shieling of planks, all are full of the poetry of mystery and omen. At Berlin *Philip and the Eunuch* has a strange greeny-dark scene of crag and bush, a waterfall, and an Italian ruin, the latter, no doubt, the result of his Italian sojourn; unlike Italy, however, is a formless cloud floating in a misty sky, which brings Rembrandt to mind. The *Flight into Egypt* of the same gallery is of similar character; faint "greeny" lights wander over broken craggy banks. All these pictures show delicate touch, picturesque detail, and poetic instinct.

When one turns to Rembrandt's landscapes, it is impossible not to feel that the scholar had breathed a congenial air of mystery, as he studied works in which form was so often subordinated to effects of gloom and haze, through which a watery light broke faintly. If his father's mill taught Rembrandt the concentration of light which he adopted for figure subjects, surely it was in the studio of Lastmann that he learnt that subdued diffusion of light which is the distinguishing grace of his landscape?

Lastmann spent some time in Rome, and came away somewhat under the spell of Caravaggio's works; but Paul Bril is said to have had a more immediate influence upon his landscape, and may have helped him in the management of his misty yet luminous effects.

Before we complete the list of Flemings of this period whose landscape claims our notice, we may diverge for a moment to the not distant Rhine country. In Cologne, helped by its neighbourhood to the Netherlands, art flickered on into the sixteenth century, showing in its landscape, which was only that of background, the influence of Netherland workmanship and the colour of Quentin Matsys. The unknown *Painter of the Death of the Virgin* is the chief illustrator of the period. The landscapes of a triptych, dated 1515 (Cologne Mus.), show extent of scene and depth of tone. The works of Van Melem (born 1493 ?) have the same quality of tone, and are good also in composition. They may be seen in the Pinacothek, Munich. If these Cologne painters exhibit any Italian influence, it most likely reached them second-hand through Mabuse and Schoreel.

But BARTHOLOMEW DE BRUYN of Cologne (died 1556) shows, at least in his later works, direct Italian influence, and, so far as landscape is concerned, to the advantage of his art. This appears if we compare the cold, hard, stiff scenery of the *Holy Stephen*, an early work in the Cologne Museum, with the landscape in a picture of a man and his wife, in the same gallery (No. 398), in which foliage, fern, and grass are put in with freedom and picturesqueness, and cloud-masses with something more than picturesqueness. Of excellent suggestion also are the landscapes of two pictures at Munich (687, 688). In one we find again a fine cloud effect with rich tone. The other is a striking evening scene; the pink light of sunset strikes upon the under side of overhanging clouds, that rise as if betokening sudden storm.

Judging from these few pictures, Bruyn awoke under Italian influence to an appreciation of some of the "moods" of nature, and rose far above the nerveless precision and unchanging light of his predecessors in Cologne art.

But by far the most important of these Rhinelanders in the matter of landscape was ADAM ELSHEIMER (1578–1620 ?), born at Frankfurt, but who lived and died at Rome. We have already noticed the obscure link which associates this excellent painter, through his teacher Uffenbach, with "the German Correggio," Grünewald, who, however, died some thirty or forty years before the birth of Elsheimer; there is something fanciful in this deriva-



tion, but there can be no question about the influence exercised by Elsheimer himself upon contemporaries, and others of later date much more famous than he; among the former may be reckoned Rubens, and among the latter Rembrandt, whose master, Lastmann, was Elsheimer's friend and companion. An influence yet more interesting has been detected by Elsheimer's latest biographer, Dr. Bode,<sup>1</sup> who points out a great similarity between his landscape and that of Claude himself, who first came to Rome in the year of Elsheimer's death, and when his reputation was still at its height.

Elsheimer's father, a well-to-do-tradesman, came from Rhenish Hesse to Frankfurt shortly before the birth of his son, whose early taste for art he encouraged by consigning him to the tutelage of Uffenbach. But when about twenty years old he, like Rubens, at nearly the same age and at about the same date, made his way to Italy. They may have met at Venice, which in the first instance was sought by both, and where, though Elsheimer is said to have been apprenticed to Rottenhammer, an unsatisfactory painter, whose chief merit is that he studied to some purpose the works of Tintoretto, one may judge that the "apprentice" learnt, from the great Venetians of the preceding century, much more than his master could teach him. It was not long before the pilgrimage of Elsheimer ended at Rome, where he thenceforth resided till his death twenty years afterwards. He is said to have married a Scotch-woman. That he was cut off at a comparatively early age has been generally ascribed to debt and poverty, but it is now believed to have been probably owing to a disease of the stomach, brought on by the intense and long-continued labour which he bestowed upon works of almost miniature size and extreme finish.

Elsheimer was thoroughly Italian in feeling, following, though on so different a scale, the style of the Carracci, but with a mixture of that of Caravaggio, which gave richness and effect to his subjects, and, along with his early German teaching, imparted to his figures something of a homely genre character. But his great teacher was nature in the picturesque and romantic solitudes which then, more than now, were abundant in the neighbourhood of Rome. It excited remark among the lively garden-loving Italians that this noble-looking and courteous personage was given to lonely wanderings;

<sup>1</sup> In the *Jahrbuch des Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*. See also an interesting article by Professor Sidney Colvin in the *Magazine of Art* for 1883, upon the pictures in the Fitzwilliam Museum.

but he was steeping himself in the idyllic beauty of ancient forests, of the recesses of the Alban hills, of the heights of Tivoli and Narni.<sup>1</sup> He carried away impressions of these wanderings in slight sketches of breadth and power, and worked them up into scenes which, despite their small size, were true instances of the "great style." In his mountains, his grand masses of trees, the "procession of his clouds," we find a prevailing sense of dignity and of beauty; his colouring was deep, mellow, harmonious, very different from the gay greenness of the Flemish-Brueghel school; but there is some resemblance to the splendour of Rubens in his use of red tints among his figures, which enabled him to give great depth to his greens, and yet to keep them perfectly clear and brilliant; this clearness also is an especial feature of his distances.

But the chief characteristic of Elsheimer is his poetical appreciation of effects of light, and the conflict of different sources of light. Sunrise, sunset, moonlight, starlight are associated with the artificial glare of torches, shepherds' fires, conflagrations. Dark masses of shade naturally accompany these exceptional illuminations, and all are vividly reflected in water. There is therefore something sensational in the aspect of his landscape, seen not only in these striking contrasts, but in the broken trunks of trees which render him as anticipative of Salvator as of Claude. It is, indeed, these remarkable and romantic effects which show original genius, not to be overborne by all his Italian culture.

To come to instances. There is a *St. Christopher*, simple in composition, in which the moon, breaking from a cloud, mingles its effulgence with that proceeding from the Holy Child, borne on the shoulders of the giant, while a third source of light is found in the torch of the friendly hermit, stretched over the darkling waters.<sup>2</sup>

But the most characteristic example of this sort is the *Flight into Egypt*, at Munich, often copied, and which pleased Rubens so much that he enlarged and altered it. The wanderers, guiding themselves by a torch amidst dense clumps of trees, and along the edge of water that reflects the moon and stars above, approach a hollow in the woods where shepherds have lighted a fire. There is enough

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Sidney Colvin asserts that Elsheimer was "the first painter who fully devoted himself to the study and interpretation of the natural beauties in the neighbourhood of Rome." In opening such a field, how great was the service he rendered to landscape-art!

<sup>2</sup> The above description is from an engraving at the British Museum. The picture I do not know.

here to try the painter's skill, but he has not only sprinkled the sky with stars, but has thrown the arch of the milky way athwart the darkness, and with vivid effect made more than one brilliant star sparkle through apertures in the forest blackness. Nor has he been content with the broad disc of the full moon, but has attempted also to depict the mysterious wrinkles upon its ancient face (Fig. 136). Perhaps we may say that nothing so redolent of the romance of landscape had been done before; the landscape of Tintoret may indeed occur to the mind, but it had not the same air of intense reality, combined with imaginative power. At the Leichtenstein Gallery the same conflict of lights is seen in the *Ceres*, treading torch in hand a darksome glade, the moon flitting for a moment into sight above the gloomy forest.

The *Angel and Tobit* crossing a stream by stepping-stones is a daylight scene, but the piled-up clouds above cast deep shade over one mass of umbrage, while another shines in sunlight, this latter brilliantly reflected in a reach of the stream. Another *Tobit* shows mingled rock and wood, and singularly recalls Altdorfer in the introduction of fir trees and pendant mosses. At Dresden, in a *Flight into Egypt*, Elsheimer introduces Roman ruins among trees—a picture that in its fine gradation of tones seems to prelude the work of Gaspar, and perhaps also gave a hint to Rubens. Claude, again, is strikingly foreshadowed in a composition where a shepherd with his pipe sits under a noble bower of a tree rising in one soft gloom into the sky.

At Petworth there are six small pictures by Elsheimer, and among them two choice specimens of sober landscape. The *St. Paul* has an exquisite mountain distance finely toned, and foliage touched with great delicacy. There is no hardness in the mountains, but wonderful suggestiveness of a deal of country. *St. Peter*, admirably draped after the Carracci manner, stands on the bank of a stream amidst graceful foliage. That Elsheimer, who was no quaint mediævalist, should surround these finely-designed figures—men whose lives were spent amongst the great cities of the ancient world—not with classic architecture, but with wide free landscape, shows that, while quite sensible of the dignity of the human figure, natural scenery lay near to his heart. The absence of sensational effects in these subjects supports Dr. Bode's opinion that they belong to his early Roman time.

The Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge is rich in the possession of

FIG. 136.—ELSHREIMER'S FLIGHT INTO EGYPT, FROM THE ENGRAVING BY GOUDT.



at least four pictures by this remarkable painter. One of them, a *Venus*, on the minutest scale, is described as having "an almost Titianic depth of colour," with "some of Elsheimer's best feeling in the massing and softness of the forest trees, and of the gleaming volumes of white cloud above them." Another subject, *Latona and the Peasants*, of larger size, illustrates "Elsheimer's predilection for lonely woods and pools";<sup>1</sup> he painted this, indeed, three times; two of the pictures have been lost, but, judging from engravings, their landscape was a more important feature than in the Cambridge example.

At Corsham are two beautiful subjects by Elsheimer—*St. Paul at Melita* and the *Death of Procris*; and both Naples and the Brunswick Gallery possess landscapes, the six at the former being remarkable as early works of large size.

With all the charm of this rare master, what yet was lacking? For one thing, though there is fine tone, there is not the suffused glow or atmosphere of the greater men to come; and for another defect, the painstaking finish makes one long somewhat for the careless breadth and simplicity of the highest genius.

<sup>1</sup> I have quoted from Professor Colvin's description of these pictures, so well known to him, in the Museum.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE LANDSCAPE OF RUBENS.

Peter Paul Rubens . . . . 1577-1640.

THE genius of RUBENS rose like a sun amidst all these lesser lights, whose ineffectual fires dimmed before the splendour. Yet it was a splendour gorgeous rather than serene, powerful rather than majestic, and which has not unjustly been likened to a meteor glare that dazzles more than it illuminates. Prodigality of invention was the predominating faculty of that large brain, and next to that, the power of assorting joyous harmonies of colour. Endowed with these commanding gifts he went at the age of twenty-three to Italy, having, since he was ten years old, lived amidst the courtly magnificence of Flanders; for Rubens was neither Protestant nor patriot, as that name was understood during the long struggle for independence; he breathed the air of courts, not the salt breezes of the dunes.

It was in the year 1600 that Rubens crossed the Alps, having passed on his way at the foot of the Vosges the humble cradle of Claude Lorraine. Rubens was not bound directly for Rome but for Venice, drawn thither by sympathy of nature for Venetian art. Veronese was but twelve years dead, Tintoretto only four, and, as Fuseli says, "the young Fleming soon compounded from the splendour of Veronese and the glow of Tintoretto, that florid system of mannered magnificence which was the element of his art." Yet we do not find any trace of Tintoretto's pathetic imagination in the work of Rubens; it is plentifully imbued with the style of Veronese, and we know that he studied Titian, though he caught nothing of his dignity; but no doubt the colour-richness of these two great masters was of service to him, still more their principles of composition, which taught him that perfection of grouping without which the torrent

of his conceptions would have poured over his huge canvases in inextricable confusion. This, we should judge, was the chief lesson he learnt at Venice, and, conjoined with his inexhaustible inventiveness, it made him one of the greatest masters of composition that Art has seen.

From Venice, Rubens went to Mantua, and into the service of the Duke, soon, however, at this time passing on to Rome. Here it may be doubted whether he got much good. The Carracci were the leaders in art, opposed, however, by the Mannerists and by Caravaggio. The academic style of the Bolognese masters would not be to the taste of Rubens, but the Mannerist imitations of Michael Angelo, the daring effects of Caravaggio, and the coarse though vigorous martyrdoms of Domenichino, would help rather than hinder his natural tendency towards the florid and grandiose—towards portraying limbs of prodigious muscle, writhing groups in tremendous action, draperies of gorgeous and massive fold. From the first, even when copying the severe designs of Mantegna, he could not avoid grosser forms, and the coarseness of Giulio Romano at Mantua, instead of revolting, seems to have attracted him. When he copied Titian he yielded somewhat to the grandeur of a superior nature. Yet one thing he could not surrender—the blooming flesh of the north! The nude women of Titian are “clothed upon” with a veil of richly subdued tints; the women of Rubens, altogether unclothed, stand stark in rosy carnations! “Does this painter mix blood with his colours?” exclaimed the scandalised Guido.

No doubt Rubens suffered from the depraved taste of his time in many ways, not least from the habit of outrageous allegorising. His fancy ran riot in this fashion of the day, and as, even in an historical scene, it was held permissible to mix up gods and goddesses, cupids, angels, and saints, Rubens was left unrestrained by any sober sense of reality, or by any dignity in the event itself. We repeat, Rubens returned from Italy imbued with principles of grand composition, both in design and chiaroscuro, but otherwise the superb, untrammelled, original genius that nature had made him.

Rubens treated all subjects—mythological and historical, sacred and profane, portraits and conversation pieces, battle and hunting scenes, animals, grotesques, and last but not least landscape. In this he is no less himself than in every other province of art. We find him versatile in subject, full of incident, movement, scenic effect,



abundantly vigorous in drawing and in cast of light and shade, especially powerful in composition; his colour fresh and daylighty, if often too verdant. But with all this—because of all this—he is seldom touched with nature's tenderness or pathos, rarely subdued by her moods of calm majesty or melted by her aspect of ineffable peace. The Rubens landscape in general is what a wealthy gentleman of Brabant would like to look at,—a stretch of rich country with a chateau, a church, farmhouses, woods, arable and meadow land. Out of this scenery he made a great deal; first, out of incidents of light, not only those of sunrise and sunset, and the conflict of sun-ray and cloud, but those of lightning and the rainbow; next, from the altitude and superb grouping and intermingling of trees which, in his pictures, are all alive with energies of growth, or bent and riven from the stress of bygone conflict. But it is remarkable that very seldom is the positive action of wind upon trees represented; clouds may be driving in the sky, a storm heralded by appalling blackness, but the trees, unlike the precepts of Leonardo or the practice of Tintoret, mostly wave and sway as in summer air! One would have thought nothing more congenial to Rubens than the torment of trees under a raging wind!

Lastly, there are his figures or "staffage"; Sir Joshua truly remarked of Rubens that "in whatever he employs his figures they do their business with great energy"; and they always come in with admirable effect in his scenes.

Throughout we must remember a remark of Waagen's that "Rubens, beyond any artist of modern times, may be styled a sketcher in the highest and best sense of the word," and this also for the reason he assigns, that "a most glowing and creative fancy, inexhaustible in the conception of new forms, full of life and vigour, would naturally find even the easiest method of painting tedious, and thus feel the necessity of acquiring some method of transferring its creations to the canvas in the shortest time possible." Thin and flowing therefore is the colour, loose and sloppy often the touch, though always full of purpose and effect. Perhaps, too, it is owing to this rapidity and lightness that clouds are generally like drifting vapours; very seldom do we find them modelled or built up into the grand forms familiar in the works of Italians. With Rubens they must move if not fly—a characteristic, we must remember, of his native misty climate. Yet Van Eyck, who saw only the cloudless clear, lived under the same misty skies!

As to the colouring of these fine works we have already called it fresh and daylighty, but, to be more precise, a yellowish green prevails, contrasted with purple-grays. Rubens had a great friendship for Jan Brueghel; he sometimes worked in concert with him; he wrote his epitaph when he died. Brueghel's notion of landscape, we may gather, was not altogether distasteful to the great man, his friend; and, though Rubens never fell into Brueghel's garish blues and gay greens, we may trace some affinity in general landscape colour. We may also assign considerable influence to Bril, who was the popular landscape-painter at Rome when Rubens was visiting that city, and whose masculine style and vigorous effects of light would not be lost upon the young Fleming, whose first master, at the age of thirteen, it is to be remembered, was a landscape-painter, Verhaeght, though, as the reputation of this painter was chiefly founded upon a picture of the Tower of Babel, his teachings in landscape were probably of small account. Rubens' use of numerous assistants led probably to the accusation that he got others to paint his landscape backgrounds, because unable to excel in landscape himself—to confute which calumny, it is said, he forthwith painted pictures which were nothing but landscape. Whether or no this story were true, it is not likely that in purely landscape subjects, limited in size as they were, he would require or accept assistance, especially as he seems to have resorted to landscape as a relaxation. To some of these works we will now direct attention.

First there are the scenes of his native fields, for, although born in Westphalia, it was during his father's detention there as a state prisoner, and at ten years of age he returned to the family possessions in Flanders, eventually building for himself a superb house at Antwerp, and finally, only five years before his death, purchasing the chateau of Stein between Vilvorde and Mechlin. At this place his home-landscapes were chiefly painted, when, being very much disabled by attacks of gout, their moderate size was more convenient to him; and when, we may suppose, incapacitated as he was by ill health from the brilliant life of courts, the peace of nature was soothing to his spirit.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Morelli remarks, with reference to the portrait by Titian of Charles V. at Munich, that "the landscape sketched in with admirable ease vividly recalls in its tones the landscape of Rubens," and adds that "it is only after his ambassadorial journey to Madrid that Rubens seems to have taken Titian as his model in landscape." No doubt it was only after that visit to Spain that Rubens retired to his chateau of Stein, but his landscape shows slight traces of the solemn harmonies of Titian, who painted a scene

This chateau is said to be represented in his pictures from several points of view. In one it is seen surrounded by its moat, and in the foreground a music party appears to have been broken up by romps among the young people. In the famous *Autumn*, of the National Gallery, the chateau is seen in one corner, and a vast extent of country stretches towards the east; the sun, just risen, illuminates it all, not a tree, not a building, but is rimmed with gold under its beams, and objects, as we look into the distance, are innumerable—long lines of pollards in the plains, open woodland upon the undulating hills melting into sunny mist. In the blues of this picture we may trace something of the Brueghel influence, but nowhere else. In the sky there are only summery clouds and lovely cirri. Rubens has followed his own taste for air and light, and among characteristic points are the groups of slender trees that mingle their foliated tops, and the prodigality of detail, down to brambles and umbelliferous plants that enrich the foreground. Rubens, after making his sketch some autumn morning, felt, we may believe, as he recrossed his drawbridge, that he had found a congenial subject.

*Spring* is in Sir Richard Wallace's collection, *Summer* and *Winter* are at Windsor. The *Summer*, though too crowded, is a delightful scene; a brook, its banks decked with water-plants in flower, and bordered by a tempting footpath, comes winding down amongst slopes of verdure sprinkled with graceful trees; over a distant hill there sweeps a soft possible shower. In *Winter*, a peasant group is gathered round a fire in a cow-house, while outside snow is falling.

Another noted landscape of this class, now in Buckingham Palace, is the *Farm of Laeken* near Brussels. It is, however, disappointing in most of the excellences we look for in Rubens. Crowded and scattered as it is in composition, the master's skill in this respect seems to have deserted him. Was he putting in all these incidents to please some potent person? Nor can we commend the hot and laboured colouring; the charm of distance, however, and of sky remain to vouch for Rubens. Unfortunately these occupy but a small portion of the subject. Would there were more of that sky with its delicate

in its watery pallor very unlike his usual style in the portrait referred to. Rubens surely seldom sketched but with "admirable ease"; he had not that to learn from Titian, but it would be interesting if a difference could be distinctly traced between his landscape painted before his visit to Spain, and that of subsequent years; for this dates are wanting; the difference observable in his landscapes may have been due rather to the loss of Brueghel ten years before.





evanescent pinks and grays, and its graceful streamers of cloud that gather and disperse as they sail before the summer airs! Pity, too, that there is only a peep of that distance full of hints and suggestions, a soft confusion of tints blended with one sweep of the brush!

Turning over Bolswert's plates, in which effects of light and shade are all the better for the absence of colour, we come upon several homely scenes. Among them are two effects of morning; one of them—from a picture at the Hague referred to by Sir Joshua Reynolds as "full of light and air"—is remarkable for its attempt to represent morning mists, in which the sun's pale disc seems to swim, and which, rising from the land, envelop village after village. In another, the sun in dazzling effulgence has just burst above the horizon, glittering in the near pools, illuminating farm-buildings, and shedding brilliance even on a country stile.

Sunset has its turn; in one rich evening scene, in perfectly flat but wooded country, Rubens has put only a man and a woman, who tread a solitary path, and farther off one or two figures trudging homeward; birds fly homeward, too, in the quickly-deepening dusk. Yet finer is the superb little picture in the National Gallery, in which the golden radiance suddenly breaks from under a cloud, gilding the trees scattered over a wide champaign, and surrounding with momentary glory every object in the foreground—the sheep, the chateau, the village church.

It is surely scarcely fair to say that Rubens, "though he had seen the Alps, usually composes his landscapes of a hayfield or two, plenty of pollards and willows, a distant spire, a Dutch house with a moat about it, a windmill, and a ditch"<sup>1</sup> Still less is the great critic justified when, from the subjects which caught the eye of Rubens in his daily rides or evening strolls, we turn to the wilder scenes that struck his fancy. Among the landscapes engraved by Bolswert is an evening subject—the picture is at St. Petersburg;—in the centre a rocky bank, bathed in the warm rays of the west, is covered with a scrambling mass of trees, intertwined in splendidly picturesque entanglement. In front a stone-cart is nearly overset as it pitches down a steep track to cross the stream. So far, excepting the western glow over the far hills, all is commotion, but for contrast there rises on the opposite side the peaceful moon, glimmering among trees, and reflected in still water. (Fig. 137.) Shall we deny to Rubens a sense of poetry in landscape? Or what shall we say to

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Painters*, iii. 187.

that canal and meadow under starlight, the moon just sailing into sight between two clouds, and reflected in the water, quivering in the night air? This, however, is scarcely wild nature; more of that character is the scene at Castle Howard, where a man watches some sheep grazing at the edge of a forest; the trees, ranged in graceful and receding groups upon the side of a stream, and merged in the radiance of a setting sun, offer one of the finest examples of Rubens' skill in composition; or, for treatment of forest, let us note in the Munich picture where hounds have just broken into a cool and silent glade, and through huge interlacing trunks bursts a wonderful flash of the sun's level beams.

Very different from all these, and with a personal interest attaching to it, is the grand view of the Escorial at early dawn (Fig. 138). White cloud-mists are clearing off the barren savagery of the surrounding hills, the palace still in gloomy shadow. One should like to know whether this subject, of which a replica is at Dresden, was painted at his earlier or his later visit? Certainly it embodies a vivid impression received as, some day, the great desolate scene opened before him!<sup>1</sup>

But Rubens could adapt himself to characteristic varieties of scenery. If there is something of the malign grandeur of Spain in the view of the Escorial, there is an Italian air about certain views in which Roman ruins are the motive—vacant arches, roofless reticulated vaulting, and massive fragments of wall, overgrown with bush and tree, such as we see fringing the Campagna in the environs of Rome. These prove to us, that while busy with his great altarpieces in the Papal city, he could yet appreciate the charm of the solitary nooks within and without the old walls, where goats browse, and the contadina passes with fruit-laden basket towards the noisy piazza. There is far less bustle of incident in these Italian subjects than in his ordinary compositions. Rubens seems to have felt the incongruity of such things with Roman memories; in one of his views a small town crests a hill in the mid-distance, the only element of life being a flock of sheep driven by two shepherds towards a far winding stream, which might be the upper Tiber in its course. There is, however, the incident of a fine bulk of cloud upon a mountain summit rolling itself away as the rising sun begins to throw shadows among the trees.

<sup>1</sup> I have copied the picture at Dresden, said in the catalogue to be "one of many repetitions painted by Uden and Momper, under the direction of Rubens."







Naturally, so daring a spirit could enter into the mood of the tempest. In one tremendous scene a storm of inky blackness bursts upon a rocky coast; rain obscures both sea and land, save that one fierce flash blazes for an instant, and lights up rock and town and tree; a man and a woman, cowering beneath the thunder-peal, cover their eyes from the glare. Again, there is the *Shipwreck of Æneas* (Fig 139). In the centre flares a beacon fire on a rocky foreland; on either side is the sea,—here, in the hurly-burly of the raging storm which engulphs the bark of the hero; there, calm in the sunlight which follows the retreating tempest. Contrasts of this kind are greatly to the taste of Rubens.

Exceptionally inferior to these is the great landscape at Vienna called the *Flood in Phrygia*. There is, indeed, marvellous inventiveness shown in incident without end, glancing light, rush of water, lightning, rain, and rainbow; but there is no concentration of effect, no real imaginative power to remind us of Tintoretto; there is still less resemblance to Titian. Nor do the crude paint and smeary look indicate “admirable ease.” The disagreeable greens and violent blue show rather the unadulterated influence of Brueghel, and point to immaturity of power. If Rubens learnt anything, at his last visit to Madrid, from Titian’s works, it would reveal itself more in colouring than anywhere else, and, where the Brueghel colouring predominates, we may suspect an earlier date. This applies to the *Garden of Love* at Dresden, a most courtly scene full of grace and greenness. The *Venus and Adonis* at the Hague is of the same Brueghel type, but it is wonderfully improved upon, simplified, and dignified. Rubens lived fifteen years after the death of his friend, and the Stein landscapes show that his influence was greatly modified; sometimes that of Italy expressly prevails, as in the *Judgment of Paris* at the National Gallery, which has a deep rich Bassano-like distance, almost that of Titian himself, not indeed in the pale sketchiness of the Charles V. at Munich, but in the purple splendour more usual with the great Venetian.

Rubens gives us tempests as they rise and as they rage, but he can also give the subsiding of a storm. There is a wonderful landscape in the Pitti, *Ulysses craving the Protection of Nausicaa*, wherein a gleam of light breaks upon the upper crags of a mountainous coast, and charmingly illuminates temples, villas, and a waterfall. We may notice, too, his frequent introduction of a rainbow—a daring feat. In the famous landscape

FIG. 129.—THE SHIPWRECK OF ÆNEAS: RUBENS, FROM AN ENGRAVING.

at the Louvre the bow springs suddenly athwart the darkness of a summer storm, retreating from sea to land. Here the rocky coast is remarkably similar in its features to the other coast-scenes described, from which we should judge that some one spot had furnished either a sketch or an impression for frequent after use. The rest of the scenery in this subject is made up of incongruous northern materials, though an Italian shepherd pipes under a tree in the foreground. Rubens is not often so artificial as in this landscape, though it is full of fine points, and its artificiality is very different from the ornamental of the Carracci school. Finer far is the *Rainbow* at Munich, of which Bolswert seems to have made an altered copy. Over a simple hayfield, a small farm on the farther side, three haystacks on the hither, a rainbow flings its radiant arch at the moment that a transient sunbeam touches gable and tree, that shine against the gloom beyond.

Such was Rubens in landscape,—ready for everything that the changing day could show, but especially for movement, the play of light and dark, and the interlock of trees. He saw everything, but, in his style of magnificent sketching, details were thrown in without a care for delicate rendering, and sometimes, as in waves of the sea, the forms are very conventional. He was more sensitive to the poetic side of nature than his pictures of proud pageantry would lead one to expect, but he was impatient of the more refined features. He could not stay to elaborate lovely Alpine distances, as Netherland painters had done in the past; indeed mountains, like waves, are given with careless regard for their forms. We must take this Rubens' landscape as the outlook of a powerful but not over-sympathetic genius upon the broad facts of visible nature.

Without altogether subscribing to them, we may end with the words of Horace Walpole :—"Seldom as he practised it, Rubens was never greater than in landscape. The tumble of his rocks and trees, the deep shadows in his glades and glooms, the watery sunshine and dewy verdure, show a variety of genius which are not to be found in the inimitable but uniform glow of Claude Lorraine."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE ADVENT OF CLAUDE AND SALVATOR.

Claude Lorraine	.	.	.	1600-1682.
Salvator Rosa	.	.	.	1615-1673.
Gaspar Poussin	.	.	.	1613-1675.

WE have shown into what a rich inheritance of landscape-art those entered who have been generally considered its founders, and have now only to indicate in a few words the position with respect to it of the two great masters whose names head this chapter.

It has been already intimated that CLAUDE GELEE (1600-1682) was born in the year that saw Rubens, a youth of twenty, but accustomed to the life of courts, arrive in Italy. Claude, the place of whose birth was near Epinal, on the Moselle, at the foot of the Vosges, also went to Italy, and when about the same age as the brilliant Fleming, but in far other circumstances. A poor orphan, with an early liking for art, but following the calling of a cook, he got to Rome somehow, perhaps assisted by an elder brother, a form-cutter, and therefore with some knowledge of drawing, who lived at Freiburg, in Breisgau, and from whom it is supposed he received some artistic instruction. At Rome, which he reached about the year 1620, the lad, whether as cook, pupil, or only grinder of colours, was received into the house of Agostino Tassi, a landscape-painter who had been himself a pupil of Bril, repeating therefore the almost invariable Flemish tradition in the matter of landscape. He may even have come more directly under the influence of Bril, and it is possible that before meeting with Tassi he had learnt perspective at Naples under a Gottfried Wals of Cologne, who was living there.

In Tassi, an artist much employed in decorative work, for which the "perspective" referred to was required, Claude would meet with Italian learning and skill inherited from the Carracci; but, judging

from the specimens of Tassi's landscapes in the Uffizi and Corsini Galleries, which show only cold correctness of design, with opaque and heavy colouring, there was absolutely nothing to suggest the glow of sunlight and the charm of atmosphere by which the lad employed in his studio was afterwards to delight the world. After five years' stay in Italy Claude set out to return to his native country, and, as he took Venice on his way, he no doubt sought to benefit by the works of Giorgione and Titian. Journeying over the Brenner he came to Munich, where it is likely that some well-to-do relatives lived; it has even been supposed that he spent some years there, and built a country house, while the scenery of the Isar is said to be traceable in some of his early pictures. Proof of this residence fails entirely, and it seems more probable that Claude, returning to Lorraine, met with no particular success there, either for "perspectives," as they were called, or easel-pictures, so that, attracted by the charm of Italy, he again started for Rome, this time by Marseilles, entering, 18th October 1627, the capital of art, never again to quit it. Success came at last with a rush. First a cardinal and then a pope, Urban VIII., ordered pictures from his hand; soon the beauty of his work captivated all eyes, wealth flowed in, and honour, till, at the age of eighty-two, he died, having raised Italian landscape-painting into a splendid branch of art.

Yet it is impossible not to feel that the art of Claude followed the old Roman lines of landscape-decoration. Lovely but artificial, it adorned the walls of palaces, and filled all the courtly world with admiration, as now galleys upon gay seas, now temples and groves, now vistas of calm distance bathed in light, filled his canvases. Artificial in the combination and crowding in of objects, in the un-failing grace that inspired every touch and arranged every group of softly-foliaged trees, in the commonplace classic figures flitting about the scene, and feebly indicating human life, it was yet exquisitely true to the great charm of Italian scenery, its serene and lustrous atmosphere undisturbed by cloud or wind; and true also to its perfect harmony of form in hill, tree, cascade, and stream, and in the buildings set about the gracious scene in endless picturesqueness. It was true no less to many an hour of perfect peace that broods over the valley of the Tiber or the Alban lakes. Therefore, ornamental though it is, there is genuine poetry in Claude, the poetry of Central and Southern Italy, with all its wealth of historical association and the beauty of its summer skies; of this his imagina-

tion never wearied. Notwithstanding all that was artificial, he recognised the independent function of landscape—its appeal to the heart—though he chose but one form of that appeal.

The advance upon the Carracci school was immense. It was great in mere workmanship, in mere translucence of tint; it was greater in the sunshine that plays over a scene, or floods it with calm effulgence; it was greater still in the air of pure and peaceful loveliness in which Claude delighted. No one before had so caught the sentiment of Italy. Claude, in fact, made the Italy that, since his time, has filled the imagination of travellers and poets. It began to be, as the crystal tints grew upon his canvas, as the lovely forms rose to sight. It began to be, as palaces and ruins, the solitary tower and distant causeway, peaceful waters among soft hills, or rippling in sunny bays, were spread before the eye. So it was that presently there shone in every gallery, even to the wintry north, a vision of Italy that coloured all men's dreams. It was no native that accomplished this,—to such the beauty of the land was possibly too familiar; nor was it revealed to either Fleming or German. It was the Rhinelander, the youth brought up amidst a landscape of ærial tints, faint hills, and far waters, who, coming to Italy, and finding these things in rare perfection, turned from all the art of Rome to the terraces of Tivoli and the shades of Albano. It was Claude of fair Lorraine who revealed far fairer Italy to the world. (Fig. 140).<sup>1</sup>

Rubens apparently saw little of this beauty; what he has given of Italy is more the forlornly grand than the beautiful, and his ordinary landscape is, as we have seen, of a totally different order. Nor did Titian express that beauty. His north-Italian nature dwelt upon wilder scenes, and he handled everything with a power that subdues rather than charms. In what he gave of landscape there is no trace of the ornamental; he has the rich solemnity, the massiveness of forest-slopes and cloud-topped mountains; and the farm, the inn, the castello, take the place of the villa and the grove. Of Claude the ornamental is at once the strength and the weakness. No one ever painted more enchanting scenes to look upon; but they are all too much of the same pattern, and the perfection of the art is too apparent.

<sup>1</sup> This subject was one of the very few that could be rendered by the photo-typographic process, but it fortunately contains most of the features usually introduced in Claude's landscapes.







The second great founder of landscape-art lived during the latter part of his life in a magnificent house near to that of Claude, on the Trinità dei Monti. But SALVATOR ROSA (1615–1673) was of an utterly different type. His restless genius never condescended to the ornamental in landscape; his restless youth had familiarised him with scenes, not of beauty and peace, but of melancholy and savage grandeur.

Born near Naples, intended early for the Church, which gave him literary culture, but passionately fond both of music and painting, he obtained some instruction in the latter from a pupil of Ribera, the imitator of Caravaggio—a point to be noticed, since it directly associates Salvator with the Naturalisti. But instead of visiting famous schools of art, Venetian or Roman, he betook himself, armed only with a map and a box of water-colours, to the dangerous solitudes of the Abruzzi, Capitanata, and Apulia, sketching as he went at Benevento, in the valley of the Volturno, and along the Adriatic coast, for in his drawings can be recognised the wild sea-washed rocks of S. Vito, the peaks of Mte. Calvo, “the romantic harbour of Bari, the dark grottoes of Polignano, the huge masses of the castle of Brindisi, the ruins of Otranto.” Here was an apprenticeship quite new in art, for though Claude early studied the Roman landscape, yet we are told he used to run back to the studio to put in the tints while he remembered them. Salvator cut himself off from all studio-work, and, consorting with vagabonds and brigands,<sup>1</sup> sought nature in the deepest recesses of crag and forest. The romantic side of landscape was fully revealed to him, including that association with the past which adds to the pathos of nature, the pathos of history. While others could plant a ruined temple as an ornamental adjunct to a picture, Salvator felt the haunting power of a crumbling wall upon the imagination, and its harmony with the scenery he loved.

The patrons of Art, however, seem to have been unprepared for this new style. Salvator, on his return to Naples, remained miserably poor, working for picture-dealers, and finding small encouragement, though it may be recorded, to the credit of Lanfranco's penetration, that, being then at Naples, he purchased every picture

<sup>1</sup> “One of his drawings shows a brigand camp in a rocky wilderness; in the midst is a young prisoner, behind is a young woman interceding for his life; she is wife or mistress of the captain, and the prisoner is Salvator.”—(Article in the “Dohme Series” by Lorenzo Bernini.)

of the "little Salvator" he could get hold of. It was at this time, too, that Salvator came under the influence and instruction of Ribera himself.

As he could achieve no independent position, being indeed but a lad of twenty, to better his fortunes, Salvator walked to Rome, but for a time made scarcely more impression there, and was sometimes without bread, though small subjects—incidents in the lives of galley-slaves, sailors, robbers, and the like—found a certain amount of sale. Fame, as in the case of Claude, came suddenly; but it is singular that he seems to have made his mark at first, not by landscape, but by figure subjects, such as "Socrates drinking the poison," and the "death of Regulus," though in the vast number of works he now produced landscape had frequent place. By the year 1639, such was the rapidity with which he had risen, his house had become one of the art-centres of Rome; to this, however, the brilliancy of his wit and the pungency of his epigrams greatly contributed. But if wit and satire helped his rise, those dangerous gifts presently made Rome too hot for him, and when he was only eight-and-twenty he found it advisable to accept an invitation to Florence and a salary from the Grand Duke.

It was now that his genius for landscape fully asserted itself, and to this place and time belongs his finest work, in the judgment of Mr. Ruskin, the *Baptism in the Jordan*, to which may be added the *Baptist in the Wilderness*, painted like the other for the Marquis Guadagni.<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 141.) Henceforward everybody wanted landscapes—marine pieces, or battles in which landscape was an integral part—from his facile hand. About 1650 he returned to Rome, and soon after established himself on the Trinità dei Monti.

Again a Roman favourite, Salvator was moved by misplaced ambition to rival the great Church works of the Roman school, declaring in his petulance that "he did not understand landscape at all." Yet the true bent of his mind was shown as, from time to time, he broke away from town life and the art of the schools, to seek the freedom and solitude of nature. He retired more than once to a lonely villa in the neighbourhood of Volterra, and in 1662 made a tour, of which he wrote with great delight, by Ancona to Loreto, returning by Assisi and Terni to Rome. But at Rome

<sup>1</sup> These pictures were purchased at Florence by the late Dr. Young of Wemyss Bay. I was kindly allowed by him to make drawings of both, and have engraved that which seems to me the most characteristic specimen of Salvator's genius.





the renown of Roman art continually betrayed him, and when at last he obtained a commission for a large altar-piece he exclaimed, "Let Michael Angelo see to it whether he can paint the nude better than I." Over this he worked himself ill, and by these efforts in a false direction, as well as by the brilliance and variety of his accomplishments, eventually wore himself out. The calmer life of Claude lasted much longer; Salvator, fifteen years younger than his neighbour, died nine years earlier.

Salvator's has been well called "the landscape of passion and portent." The passion we find in the jagged lines of rock, the gashed and shivered tree-stems, the vivid lights and darks, the stormful clouds, the association with the passionate in human life—an association in which we recognise not only the man of the south, but the influence of the "Naturalisti" school, so powerful at Naples. Of portent—that bodeful, mysterious breath of terror which is a chief element of romance—we find the presence in almost every landscape, with its desolate trees stretching over lurking pools, its dark impending crags. Here is nature burdened with a sense of fate, unrest, catastrophe.

It is probable that the tendency of the "Naturalisti" to seek subjects among the passions of the common people first led the young Salvator to penetrate the haunts of brigands, and that then the sympathetic character of the scenery took possession of his fancy, and gave to his pictures their peculiar character. This gradually catching the public eye as a new and startling element, more and more of it was demanded, while its author wasted his energies in striving to achieve a different kind of fame. Be this as it may, Salvator certainly was the first who found in the romance of landscape a special field for art.

All this was far as the poles asunder from ordinary Flemish landscape, populous with towns and farmsteads. Nor had Rubens, with all his vigour, done anything like the same thing, though he sometimes approached it. His characteristic scenery has still the settled Low-Country look; his woods are not broken by portentous rock; his clouds have no awful glare, no surging blackness. Titian had more in common with this man of defile and forest; Tintoret more still; but both struck a higher note than Salvator ever reached, the one in sense of grandeur, the other of mystery. As for Claude, we need not say more upon the opposite aspect of nature which he illustrated, except to point out that, inferior in original conception

and power of hand as he might be to Salvator, he possessed a higher gift in his perception of the pathos of beauty—a perception which demands a calmer and more restful outlook, a tenderer sympathy with the world of life and nature, than belonged to his rival.

In GASPAR POUSSIN or DUGHET (1613–1675), the contemporary of Claude and Salvator, we find Claude with a difference,—a great difference,—in the absence of the latter's sunshine, serene and sweet; but there is compensation in Gaspar's fine and solemn composition, his cool umbrageous depths, his silent pools, in his greater freedom of foliage, and power of movement, in his preference for lonely figures rather than the lively bustle of life. Gaspar and the two of more commanding fame form the trio to whom what may be called the science of landscape-art is due. They were the masters of that Roman school that so long and widely governed the course of landscape-art in other lands.

To trace that course is beyond our province, but in winding up our subject we may glance for a moment along the line of its development. Up to the point we have reached, the best landscape-art was entirely devoted to poetical composition, for which the finest elements in natural scenery furnished the materials. There lay yet before it the large and fruitful, if less exalted, field of the domestic, the individual, the literal. To this Rubens had in a measure shown the way, but it remained for his neighbours, the Dutch, to display all its wealth. True, this cannot be done without poetic insight; and in the finest Dutch art we see how a canal, a village, a flat shore, even a town street, can be rendered heart-full of poetry. Let us remember how much we owe in this respect to Van Goyen, Cuyp, Teniers, Van der Neer, P. Potter, J. Ruysdael, Van der Heyden, and to the greatest Hollander of them all, Rembrandt van Rhyn.

Landscape certainly was not his special field, yet when he touched it, Rembrandt showed what genius could do with the simplest, the slightest materials. Rembrandt saw light and shade, not as Caravaggio had seen them, only in vivid contrast, but full of permeating colour—aglow with colour. Notwithstanding his preference for that concentration of light amidst surrounding darkness, of which the shutter-hole is said to have given him the suggestion, he did not in his landscape attempt, as he might have done, to make a shutter-hole in his clouds, but rather filled his scene with the mysterious

glow of which he was master, illuminating cloudy skies, infusing it among veiling mists. Nothing could be simpler than his forms, yet nothing could be more imbued with imaginative power,—a power reminding us of Tintoret, only that Rembrandt had far more technical skill, and did not disdain to shed the glory of colour over the humblest object. Nor was he dependent upon colour to express poetic feeling; his slightest sketch breathes it in every line. A shed upon a crumbling bank, with a bush and a broken rail, will tell its story—its story of transitory things. The Italian landscapists could be abundantly picturesque, but we miss in them this deeper sympathy with the individual, and with the pathos of humble ways.

In so domestic a country as England it is not surprising that domestic landscape should reach a high degree of excellence—an excellence also largely due to the essentially picturesque character of its scenery. Nowhere else do we find the village church with “ivy-mantled tower,” the country lane, the cottage, the footpath at the foot of “nodding beech,” enriched with all tender or happy associations; nowhere else has landscape-art created so charming a region of rural beauty.

But England, in the person of that supreme master of landscape, Turner, has also shown a capacity for imaginative landscape of the noblest kind. With the mention of this great genius we lay down the pen. All has been said that can be said about the Turner landscape, but we would put into a few concluding words our notion of its relation to the history we have been pursuing. In the first place, Turner took possession of the world of atmosphere; all the skyey vault to its uttermost recesses, its openings into the heart of heaven, its infinite gradations both of light and colour, the tender veilings of cloud, and their wind-borne masses,—all the region of the air and the glory of it,—was his, as none had ever possessed it before; distance with its unsearchableness, its innumerable hints and faint suggestions,—distance with its ineffable charm,—was rendered by him as by none other. All the witchery of water, in stream or river, lake or ocean, was at his command. He knew how to avail himself of the utmost grace of form to be found in hill, mountain, and tree; and with unparalleled skill could work all these materials into one complex but exquisitely perfect scene. Well, too, did he understand how to link the spectacle of nature with the story of human life; man is there, not as a mere ornament or adjunct, but as the keynote of his subject.



Landscape has found in Turner its highest exponent hitherto. He read in scenery as in a magic glass the sympathy of nature with the human heart. To him the spectacle was as a never-ending symphony, the chords of which he was ever translating into the terms of the art he loved.

Gathering into his single hand the results of all the landscape-art that had gone before, he enhanced the store with the treasures of his own imaginative insight, and poured forth things new and old in his great interpretation of the heavens and the earth as they are spread before us. If our theory of this spectacle has been questioned by the reader,—if our understanding of it as a vast symbolism answering to all that is highest and deepest in human nature, as being, in fact, nothing less than a Divine parable in picture, has seemed doubtful,—we would say that the work of Turner proclaims it to be such. Largely unconscious as he might be of his mission, he has shown how every line and tint of the world without, answer to the mysteries of the world within.

There are, we may admit, many and grievous inequalities, deficiencies, faults, in Turner's work; but he has grasped the master-key, and whosoever would penetrate by the way of pictorial art into the shrine of nature's symbolism, must take that key and enter by his door.

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## INDEX.

**AËRIAL PERSPECTIVE**: see **PERSPECTIVE**  
**AGATHARCHOS**, father of scene and landscape painting, 94, 96  
     stories of, 95  
**AJUNTA**, frescos of, 88  
**ALBANI**, Francesco, 389-391  
     his relations with Guido Reni, 391  
     his works at Bologna, 390; Milan, 389; Naples, 390; Rome, 390; Turin, 390  
**ALBERTINELLI**, Mariotto, his *Visitation* in the Uffizi, 249  
 "ALBERTO D'OLANDA," 159  
**ALLORI**, Agnolo (Il Bronzino), 392  
**ALLORI**, Alessandro, 392  
**ALLORI**, Cristofano, his works, 393  
**ALNWICK CASTLE**, works of Bellini, 324; of Titian, 324, 353, 354  
*Alpe*, meaning of the word, 38 *note*  
**ALTDORFER**, Albrecht, his relations with Dürer, 291  
     details of his life, 291, 292; and of his works, 292-301  
     his introduction of mosses, 296, 301  
     his *Martyrdom of St. Quirinus*, 293, 299-301  
     works of Ostendorfer attributed to, 296 and *note*  
     his landscape-engravings, 301  
     his appreciation of scenic effects in nature, 301  
     whether the painter of the *Noli me tangere* at Hampton Court, 307  
     picture by Van Orley attributed to, 297, 403 *note*  
     his works at Augsburg, 297; Berlin, 296; Bremen, 297; British Museum, 301; Glasgow, 298; Lübeck, 297, 301 *note*, 403 *note*; Munich, 292, 295;

Nuremberg, 293, 294, 296, 301 *note*; Ratisbon 295; Siena, 299, 301 *note*; Vienna, 297  
**ALTDORFER**, Ulrich, father of Albrecht, 291  
**ALZANO**, picture by Lotto at, 360  
**AMSTERDAM**, Ryks collection, picture by Schoreel, 407  
**ANGELICO**, Fra, character of his landscapes, 185 *et seq.*  
     his treatment of rocks, 187-189; of trees, 189  
     his works at Florence and Munich, 185, 186, 187  
**ANTONELLO DA MESSINA**: see **MESSINA**  
**ANTONIO**, Marc, his use of van Leyden's engraving, 405  
**ANTWERP**, works at, of van Leyden, 405, 406; Matsys, 173; van der Meire, 168; Messina, 311; Patenier, 172; Schoreel, 407; Stuerboudt, 166  
**APELLES**, 98  
**APOLLO**, survival of representations of, 127 *note*  
**APOLLODORUS**, 96  
**ARABIC POETRY**, 33  
**ARCHITECTURE**, development of art in, 1  
**ARETINO**, Peter, his appreciation of nature 43  
**AREZZO**, frescos of Della Francesca at, 199, 200 *note*  
**ARIOSTO**, his description of scenery, 42  
     governor of the Lunigiana, 42 *note*  
**ARISTOPHANES**, his appreciation of landscape beauty, 13  
**ARISTOTLE**, illuminated MS. of, 133  
**ART**, development of, in architecture, 1  
     in landscape painting, 2-5, 51, 52

- principles of, applied to landscape, 58  
*et seq.* ; 79  
 landscape of early christian, 114-122 :  
   see also *Flemish, German, Italian, &c.*  
 ASOLO, view of, 62 ; picture by Lotto at,  
 360  
 ASPERTINI, Amico, his frescos at Bologna  
 and Lucca, 241  
 ASSISI, *Entombment* by Cimabue at, 127  
 ASSYRIAN ART, its characteristics, 87  
 ATMOSPHERE, effect of, on colour, 75, 76  
 AUGSBURG, its relations with Venice, 287  
   birthplace of Holbein, 305  
   works at, of Altdorfer, 297 ; Burgkmair,  
   288 ; Cranach, 305 ; Holbein the  
   Elder, 305  
 AUSONIUS, his feeling for landscape, 29  
 AVIGNON, picture by Giotto at, 184
- BADALOCCHIO, Sisto, 395  
 BAGH, fresco-painting in the caves at, 89  
 BALDUNG, Hans ("Grien"), his relations  
   with Dürer, 290  
   his works, 290  
 BALDWIN, Count of Flanders (Latin Em-  
   peror of Romania), dragon from St.  
   Sophia given to Ghent by, 151  
 BARBARIS, Jacopo de, 286, 403  
 BARTOLO, Taddeo di, 182  
 BARTOLOMMEO, Fra, a pupil of Roselli, 246  
   his uniform excellence, 246  
   depicts architecture in later works, 248  
   his works at Florence, 248 ; Lucca, 247 ;  
   Panshanger, 248  
 BASAITI, Marco, pupil of Bellini, 318, 330  
   his works at Florence, 330 ; Milan, 330 ;  
   Murano, 331 ; National Gallery, 330 ;  
   Padua, 330 ; Venice, 330, 331 ;  
   Vienna, 331  
 BASIL, St., his appreciation of nature, 28  
 BASLE MUSEUM, works of Dürer, 280  
   *note* ; Grünewald, 303 ; Holbein, 307 ;  
   Manuel, 291  
 BASSANO, Francesco, son of Jacopo, 365  
   his fresco of the Battle of Cadore, 366  
 BASSANO (Jacopo da Ponte), a pupil of  
   Bonifazio, 363  
   his preference for twilight, 363  
   his works at Bassano, 365 ; Florence,  
   364, 365 ; Milan, 364 ; Munich, 365 ;  
   Rome, 364, 365 ; Turin, 365 ; Vienna,  
   536
- BASSANO, Leandro, his works, 366  
 BASSANO MUSEUM, pictures by the Bassanos  
   in, 365, 366  
 BAZZI, Antonio de (Il Sodoma), his love of  
   animals, 245  
   his painting resembles ancient wall-  
   painting, 245  
   his works at Florence and Mte. Oliveto,  
   245 ; Rome, 246 ; Siena, 245  
 BEAUMONT, Mr., *Nativity* by Giorgione,  
 334  
 BEAUTY of line, 54-58  
 BEDFORD MISSAL, the, 140  
 BEHAM, Bartel, 289  
 BEHAM, Sebald, 289  
 BELLINI, Giovanni, his mountain outlines,  
 65, 66  
   Mantegna's influence on, 317  
   his progress in landscape, 318-320  
   his relations with Dürer, 320, 322, 324  
   his works at Alnwick, 324 ; London, 317,  
   319, 320 ; Murano, 321 ; Naples, 318 ;  
   Pesaro, 318 ; Venice, 317, 320, 321,  
   322, 324  
 BELLINI, Jacopo, pupil of Gentile da Fab-  
   riano, 311, 317  
 BELLUNO MUSEUM, picture of Mazzolino  
   at, 268  
 BELTRAFFIO, his works in London and  
   Paris, 229  
 BEMBO, Pietro, landscape, how regarded  
   by, 43  
   his influence on Giorgione, 332  
 BERGAMO, birthplace of Lotto, 359  
   scenery of, depicted by Lotto, 359, 360  
   his works at, 360  
 BERLIN, works at, by Altdorfer, 296 ; Bal-  
   dung, 290 ; Bril, 409, 410 ; Brueghel,  
   Pieter, 412 ; Carpaccio, 326 ; Car-  
   racci, Annibale, 384 ; Cima, 328, 340  
   *note* ; Cosimo, 227 ; Cranach, 304 ;  
   Credi, 225 ; van Eyck, 149 ; Feti, 397 ;  
   Gheerardt, 170 ; Ghirlandaio, 206 ;  
   Lastmann, 418 ; van Leyden, 405 ;  
   Lippi, Filippo, 195 ; Mabuse, 403 ;  
   Momper, 415 ; Mostaert, 176 ; Pate-  
   nier, 171 ; Pollaiuolo, 202 ; Raphael,  
   255, 258 ; Savoldo, 359 ; Schiavone,  
   367 ; Stuerboudt, 167 ; de Vos, 408  
   and *note* ; van der Weyden, 156  
 BHAVABHUTI, his feeling for landscape, 32  
*Biblia Regia*, the, illuminated MS. of, 14

- BLAES, H. de**, his works at Brussels, Dresden, London, Munich, and Vienna, 174  
his nickname, "Civetta," 174
- BLOEMART, Abraham**, 408
- BOCCACCIO**, his descriptions of scenery, 40, 184  
his influence on Giorgione, 332
- BODE, Dr.**, on Elsheimer's influence, 420
- BOLOGNA**, School of the Carracci at, 380 ; of Calvart, 386
- BOLOGNA—Academy**, works at, of Albani, 390 ; the Carracci, 381, 382 ; Domenichino, 387 ; Francia, 238, 239 ; Guercino, 399 ; Reni, Guido, 391  
Bentivoglio Chapel, fresco of Costa, 241  
S. Cecilia, frescos of Aspertini, 241 ; of Costa, 241 ; of Francia, 240  
S. Maria ai Servi, picture by Albani, 390
- BONIFAZIO (Veneziano)** represents the effect of the sun in landscape, 361  
his works at Dresden (!), 336 ; Milan, 361 ; Rome, 361 ; Venice, 361, 362
- BORDONE, Paris**, his works, 362, 363
- BOTTICELLI, Sandro**, compared with Ghirlandaio, 209  
his love of trees, 210  
his introduction of Roman ruins, 213  
his works at Florence, 210, 211, 213 ; London, 212 ; in the Sistine Chapel, 209, 210-212, 213 ; Turin, 212
- BOUTS, Dierick** : see **STUERBOUDT**
- BREMEN**, works of Altdorfer at, 297 ; of Dürer, 281, 282
- BRIDGEWATER GALLERY** : see **LONDON**
- BRIL, Matthew**, 409
- BRIL, Paul**, his friendship with Annibale Carracci, 388  
his influence on Lastmann, 418 ; on Rubens, 427  
as to his influence on Claude, 434  
his works at Berlin, 409, 410 ; Milan, 411 ; Paris, 410 ; Petworth, 411 ; Rome, 411 ; Turin, 411
- BRONZINO (Agnolo Allori)**, 392
- BROWN**, prevailing colour of Florence, 315
- BRUEGHEL, Jan**, 413-415  
his works at Berlin, 412 ; Brussels, 414 ; Cassel, 414, 415 ; Dresden, 414 ; the Hague, 414 ; Rome, 414 ; Vienna, 413  
his friendship with Rubens, 427
- BRUEGHEL, Pieter**, 411-413  
called "Peasant," 412  
his works at Berlin, 412 ; Rotterdam, 413 ; Vienna, 412
- BRUGES**, residence and death of John van Eyck at, 148  
as to Memlinc's death at, 159  
works at, of Gheerardt, 170 ; Memlinc, 161, 164 ; Mostaert, 176
- BRUGGIA, Giovanni da**, identified with Hans Memlinc, 311
- BRUNSWICK GALLERY**, works of Elsheimer at, 423
- BRUSSELS GALLERY**, works at, of de Bles, 174 ; Brueghel, Jan, 414 ; van Eyck, 151 *note* ; Matsys, 173 ; Mostaert, 176 ; van Orley, 403 ; Tintoretto, 373 ; van der Weyden, 158 *note*
- BRUYN, Bartholomew de**, 419
- BUDWORTH, Philip**, his picture, by Scarsellino, 394
- BUONAROTTI, Michael Angelo**, not a painter of landscape, 251
- BURCKMAIR, Hans**, Venetian influence on, 288  
his treatment of twilight, 288  
his works at Augsburg and Nuremberg, 288, 289
- BURLEIGH HOUSE**, picture by van Eyck at, 153
- BUTLER, Charles**, *Finding of Moses* by Bordone, 362
- BYZANTINE ART**, use of the term, 122  
in manuscripts, 124-129  
its decline, 129
- CADORE, Pieve di**, birthplace of Titian, 342  
scenery of, 343, 347, 348, 353, 354
- CADORE, battle of**, painted by Titian and Fr. Bassano, 366
- CAGLIARI, Paolo** : see **VERONESE**
- CALVART, Denys**, his school at Bologna, 386, 392
- CAMBRIDGE, Fitzwilliam Museum**, pictures by Elsheimer at, 422
- CAMOENS**, his descriptions of the sea, 45
- CARAVAGGIO, Michael Angelo Amerighi da**, founds the school of the *Naturalisti*, 392, 395  
his character and influence, 395-397  
his works in the National Gallery and Wardour Castle, 396

- CARPACCIO, Vittore, 325-327  
 his works at Berlin, 326; National Gallery, 326; Venice, 325, 326, 327
- CARRACCI, Agostino, his sonnet on art, 380  
 his drawings and engravings, 382  
 his works at Castle Howard, 383; Florence, 382, 383; Turin, 382
- CARRACCI, Annibale, his landscape-painting, 381, 383-386  
 his friendship with Bril, 383  
 his works at Berlin, 384; Bridgewater Gallery, 384, 386; National Gallery, 384, 385; Paris, 383; Rome, 384
- CARRACCI, Ludovico, his distaste of the "Mannerists," 379  
 school founded at Bologna by, 380  
 character of his landscapes, 381  
 his works at Bologna, 381, 382; Bridgewater Gallery, 381; Parma, 382; Rome, 382
- CASENTINO, Jacopo, 184
- CASSEL, pictures at, by Jan Brueghel, 414, 415; Schänfelein, 287
- CASTELFRANCO, birthplace and subject by Giorgione at, 332, 333
- CASTLE HOWARD, works at, of Carracci, Agostino, 383; Feti, 397; Guercino, 399; Rubens, 430; Tintoretto, 373
- CATACOMBS, mural-painting in, 114
- CATULLUS, his appreciation of landscape beauty, 17  
 his love of the sea, 17
- CELLINI, Benvenuto, 278
- CHALDON CHURCH, clouds in the painting at, 140 *note*
- CHARLEMAGNE, influence of his time on miniature-painting, 128  
 his gospel book at Vienna, 129
- CHARLES V., Emperor, portrait of, by Titian, 356, 427 *note*
- CHATSWORTH, Benedictional of S. Ethelwold at, 140 *note*  
 alleged *Titian* at, 340 *note*
- CHAUCER, Geoffrey, his appreciation of nature, 45-47
- CHIAROSCURO, discovered by Zeuxis, 97
- CHINESE ART, primitive representations of landscape in, 7  
 its characteristics, 90-92
- CHOLMONDELY, Mr., his alleged *Giorgiones*, 336
- CHRISTIAN ART, early landscapes of, 114-122
- CHRISTIANITY, early, nature how regarded by, 27, 50
- CHRISTINA, Queen of Sweden, her visit to Guercino, 398
- CHRISTINA OF PISA, her illuminated poems, 138
- CHRYSTOM, John, St., on landscape beauty, 29
- CHURCH, Eastern, canons of, fatal to art, 121
- CICERO, as to his feeling for nature, 23
- CIGOLI, Ludovico, 397
- CIMABUE, 127, 180
- CITTÀ DELLA PIEVE, birthplace of Perugino, its influence on his landscape, 229  
 his fresco at, 229
- CLAUDE LORRAINE (Gelé), his distant effects, 76, 81  
 studies under Tassi, 434  
 his second going to Rome, 435  
 his decorative landscapes, 435  
 beauty of Italy revealed by, 436
- CLAUDIAN, his perception of scenery, 29
- CLOUDS, as described by Aristophanes, 13  
 in Roman art, 104  
 in early Christian mosaics, 119-121  
 heraldic sign for, 140 and *note*  
 supernatural, 139, 140  
 Leonardo da Vinci on, 218  
 treatment of, by Bellini, 319; Titian, 355
- COLALTO, works at, of Pordenone, 339  
 castle of, 340 *note*
- COLMAR, works at, of Baldung, 290; Grünewald, 303; Schongauer, 274
- COLOGNE, representations of, in Memlinc's pictures, 161  
 Cathedral, Lochner's *Adoration of the Kings* in, 272  
 Museum, pictures at, by the Master of the Lyversberg Passion, 272; and of the date of Wilhelm of Cologne, 272; by Bruyn, 419; and Lochner, 272
- COLOGNE SCHOOL, 271-273, 419  
 its relations with Italy, 309  
 excels in colour, 309
- COLOGNE, Wilhelm of, 271
- COLOUR, small notice of, in Homer, 10

- Virgil's perception of, 19  
 in nature, 74  
 modifications of, 75-77  
 unity of purpose essential to, 78  
 in Chinese art, 91  
 a characteristic of the Siena school, 180  
 Leonardo da Vinci on, 215  
 pre-eminent in Cologne and Netherland art, 309  
 Venetian sense of, 314, 315  
 brown prevails in Florence, 315
- COLVIN, Sidney, his article on Elsheimer, 420, 421 *note*
- COMPOSITION, definition of, 70
- CONEGLIANO, Cima da (Giovanni Battista),  
 source of his landscapes, 328, 329  
 his works at Berlin, 328, 340 *note* ;  
 Dresden, 329 ; Milan, 328 ; National  
 Gallery, 329, 340 *note* ; Paris, 328 ;  
 Parma, 328, 329 ; Venice, 327, 328
- CONSTANTINOPLE, St. Sophia, dragon from,  
 identified in a picture of van Eyck's,  
 151
- CONVENTIONALISM, 84
- CORREGGIO, 265-267  
 his works at Apsley House, 267 *note* ;  
 Dresden, 266, 293 ; Florence, 266 ;  
 Parma, 265, 266 ; Rome, 265, 269 ;  
 Stafford Gallery, 267 *note*
- CORSHAM, pictures at, of Elsheimer, 423
- COSIMO, Piero di, Roselli's *Sermon on the Mount*, probably painted by, 209, 226  
 characteristics of his landscapes, 225-227  
 portrait of Ferrucci attributed to, 241 *note*  
 his works at Berlin, 227 ; Florence, 226 ;  
 London, 227 ; Paris, 227 ; Rome, 209, 226
- COSTA, Lorenzo, his relations with Francia, 240  
 his works at Bologna, London (?), and Milan, 241 ; Paris, 240
- COWLEY, Abraham, his love of nature, 49
- CRANACH, Lucas, his position in landscape-art, 304  
 his works at Augsburg, 305 ; Berlin, 304 ;  
 Nuremberg, 304 ; Vienna, 304
- CREDI, Lorenzo di, characteristics of his landscapes, 224  
 his works at Berlin, Florence, London, and Paris, 225
- CRESCENT AND STAR, survival of pagan tradition in, 127 *note*
- CRIVELLI, Carlo, 316
- CROMLECHS represented in early Roman art, 103, 109
- CROWE AND CAVALCASELLE, Messrs., on the death of Memlinc, 159  
 on miniature work, 160  
 on an alleged fresco of Masaccio's at Florence, 194 *note*  
 on the topography of Raphael's landscapes, 257  
 on Bellini, 318, 319 ; Carpaccio, 325 ;  
 Giorgione, 333
- CRUCIFIXION, subject of, avoided in early Christian art, 127  
 pagan survivals in the representation of, 127
- CURVATURE, beauty of, 55-58, 65
- CYCLAMEN, grace of curve in, 58  
 proportion of parts in, 60
- CYPRESSES in early Italian art, 189
- DALMATIA, patron saint of, represented by Carpaccio, 325 ; Schiavone, from, 366
- DANTE, his appreciation of landscape beauty, 35-39, 51  
 compared with Giotto, 183 ; with Dürer, 285
- DAVID : see GHEERARDT
- DAVIES, W., on the site of Pliny's Tuscan villa, 23 *note*
- DEL PACCHIA, 244
- DELLA FRANCESCA, Piero, scientific nature of his teaching and work, 199  
 his works at Arezzo, 199 ; Florence, 200 ;  
 London, 200
- DEL SARTO, Andrea, a pupil of Cosimo, 249  
 his works at Florence, 250 ; Panshanger, 249 ; Paris, 250
- DENHAM, Sir John, his love of nature, 49
- DIANA, survival of representations of, 127 *note*
- DIAPER PAINTING, its origin and effect on landscape-art, 131  
 disappearance of, 135
- DINGWALL, S., a *Bellini* in his collection, 318
- DOLOMITE characteristics in the rocks of Dante, 36 *note* ; of G. di Paolo, 189 ;  
 of van der Meire, 168

- DOMENICHINO** (Domenico Zampieri), Flemish influence on, 386  
 character of his landscapes, 386-389  
 influence of Caravaggio on, 396  
 his works at Bologna, 387; London, 388; Naples, 387; Paris, 388; Rome, 387
- DONAUESCHINGEN**, painting of Bartel Beham at, 290
- DOSSE**, Dosso, his works, 269
- DOSSE**, Giambattista, 269
- DRESDEN**, works at, of de Bles, 174; Bonifazio (?), 336; Brueghel, Jan, 414; Cima, 329; Correggio, 266, 393; Dosse, 269; Dürer, 280; Elsheimer, 422; van Eyck, 153; Feti, 397; Giorgione (?), 335; Memling, 165; Messina, 311; Momper, 415; Palma Vecchio, 338; Rubens, 430, 431; Savery, 416; Veronese, 368
- DUCCIO DI BUONINSEGNA**, compared with Cimabue and Giotto, 180  
 his adoption of low horizon, 181  
 his works at Siena, 127, 180-182
- DUDLEY HOUSE**, works at, of Raphael, 254, 255
- DUGHET**: see **POUSSIN**
- DÜRER**, Albrecht, records seeing a picture of van der Weyden's, 155  
 his relations with Patenier, 173  
 his treatment of landscape, 276-287, 291; of mountains, 277, 278, 283; of the sea, 279; of trees, 281, 282, 283; of rocks, 283  
 excels in engraving, 280  
 his topography, 281  
 his woodcuts, 283  
 his mental characteristics, 285  
 his studies of the Passion, 285  
 contemporary testimony to, 286, 320  
 his friendship with Hans Baldung, 290  
 his praise of Bellini, 322, 324  
 entertained by van Leyden, 404  
 his works at Basle, 280 *note*; Bremen, 281, 282; British Museum, 281, 283; Dresden, 280; Florence, 277, 278, 283; Nuremberg, 277; Paris, 281, 282; Vienna, 279; in private collections, 281, 282, 283
- DUTCH SCHOOL**, 52, 406
- EASTLAKE**, Lady, on Cosimo's landscapes, 227
- EASTLAKE**, Sir C., on the Venetian sense of colour, 315  
 on Titian, 341, 352
- EGYPTIAN ART**, its characteristics, 87
- ELLORA**, caves at, 88
- ELSHEIMER**, Adam, his influence on various painters, 303, 419, 420  
 his study of nature, 420, 421  
 his effects of light, 421  
 his works at Brunswick, 423; Cambridge, 423; Corsham, 422; Dresden, 422; Munich, 421; Naples, 423; Petworth, 422; Vienna, 422
- ENCAUSTIC**, art of, 97
- ENGELBRECHTSEN**, Cornelius, 404
- ENGLAND**, excellence of landscape-art in, 441
- ENGLISH LITERATURE**, appreciation of nature in, 45 *et seq.*
- ENGRAVING**, by Altdorfer, 301; Dürer, 280; L. van Leyden, 404
- EPHRUSSI**, C., on Dürer's sketches of scenery, 283
- EYCK**, Alt, monastery of, 147
- EYCK**, Hubert van, 147
- EYCK**, John van, his *Holy Warriors*, beauty of mountain form in, 58  
 his gradations of colour, 79  
 born at Maeseyck, 147  
 flourished under John of Bavaria and Philip of Burgundy, 147, 148  
 his death at Bruges, 148  
 excels in landscape-art, 148-153; and in oil-painting, 148, 154  
 called "the father of landscape-painting," 153  
 practises miniature painting, 153, 160  
 compared with Italian contemporaries, 154  
 his works at Berlin, 149; Brussels, 151 *note*; Burleigh House, 153; Dresden, 153; Ghent, 148; Paris, 151
- EYE**, Dr. Von, on Dürer, 291  
 on landscape-art in miniatures of the fifteenth century, 376
- FABRIANO**, Gentile da, praised by van der Weyden, 158  
 depth of colour in his work, 310  
 teacher of Bellini, 311
- FEDERIGO**, Duke of Urbino, his preference for oil-painting, 253



- FERGUSON, J., on the grotto theory of Indian rock-temples, 89 *note*
- FERRARA, ducal palace, paintings of Dosso Dossi, 269
- FERRUCCI, Francesco, his portrait in the National Gallery, 241
- FESLEN, Melchior, 304
- FETI, Domenico, influence of Caravaggio on, 397  
works of, at Berlin, Castle Howard, Dresden, and Paris, 397
- FLEMISH ART, its excellence in illuminations, 135, 146  
prevalence of landscape in, 146  
its influence on German art, 271, 273  
its connexion with Venetian art, 309  
its sense of colour, 309  
excels in landscape, 309  
oil-painting due to, 310  
Italian influence on, 403 *et seq.*
- FLORENCE, prevailing colour of, 315
- FLORENCE—Academy, pictures by Angelico, 185, 186; Botticelli, 210; Credi, 225; Fabriano, Gentile da, 310; Ghirlandaio, 205; Perugino, 231; Verrocchio, 203
- Badia, Lippi, Filippino, 207
- Churches—*Bancacci Chapel*—Lippi, Filippino, 208; Masaccio, 191, 192. *Degli Innocenti*—Ghirlandaio, 205. *S. Maddalena dei Pazzi*—Perugino, 232. *S. Maria Novella*—Ghirlandaio, 206. *S. Marco*—Angelico da Fiesole, 187
- Palaces—*Pitti*—Bartolommeo, Fra, 248; Bassano, 366; Carracci, Agostino, 382, 383; Del Sarto, 250; Raphael, 259, 263; Rubens, 431; Savoldo, 358, 359 *note*; Schiavone, 367; Tintoretto, 374; Veronese, 368; Vinci, Leonardo da, 223. *Riccardi*—Gozzoli, 197. *Uffizi*—Albertinelli, 249; Allori, 393; Bartolommeo, Fra, 248; Basaiti, 330; Bassano, 364, 365; Bazzi, 245; Botticelli, 210, 211, 213; Carracci, Agostino, 382; Correggio, 266; Cosimo, 226; Credi, 225; Dürer, 277, 278, 283; Della Francesca, 200; Ghirlandaio, 206; Giorgione, 333; Lippi, Filippo, 195; Mantegna, 313; Memlinc, 163; Michael Angelo, 251; Perugino, 234; Pesellino, 196; Pollaiuolo, 201; Raphael, 260; Savoldo, 358; Signorelli, 236; Titian, 346, 347; Veronese, 368, 369
- FLOBIAN, St., probably the martyr of the so-called *Martyrdom of St. Quirinus* of Altdorfer, 301 and *note*  
a patron of bridges, 301
- FOLIAGE, treatment of, in Roman art, 107; L. van Leyden's, 405; J. Brueghel's, 414
- FORESTS, Dante's dislike of, 37, 39  
treatment of, by Titian, 347, 348
- FORM, character of line in, 54-59  
its symbolic nature, 54  
proportion of parts in, 59-63  
its organic unity, 63-70
- FRANCIA (Raibolini), originally a goldsmith, 237  
beauty of his Madonnas, 237  
his skies, 239  
compared with Perugino, 240  
his works at Bologna, 238, 239, 240; Milan, 237, 238, 239; Parma, 238; Rome, 238
- FRANKFORT, pictures at, by Baldung, 290; Matsys, 173; Memlinc, 163; van der Weyden, 156
- FREIBURG, altar-piece by Baldung, 290
- FRENCH ILLUMINATING, 134, 138, 142
- FRESCOS, Indian, 88; in Italy, 180
- FRESHFIELD, Douglas, on Dante's rock-landscapes, 36 *note*  
on the meaning of *Alpe*, 38 *note*  
on the topography of Leonardo da Vinci's mountains, 219 and *note*, 222 *note*  
on Perugino's promontories, 230 *note*
- FUNGAI, Bernardino, 244
- FUSELI, H., on Guercino, 398; on Rubens, 424
- GAROFALO, Il (Benvenuto Tisio), his pictures at Loreto, 268; Naples, 268; National Gallery, 267; Paris, 267; Parma, 267; Rome, 268
- GASSEL, Lucas, 407
- GAY, John, his *Shepherd's Week*, 50
- GELÉE, Claude: see CLAUDE
- GENERALISATION in art, growth of, 69
- GENESIS, book of, illuminated MS. of, 124
- GERMAN ART, Flemish influence on, 271, 273, 275; sterner landscape of, 274  
its connexion with Venetian art, 309  
Italian influence on, 419



- GHEERARDT, David, his works at Berlin, 170; Bruges, 170; Munich (?), 170; National Gallery, 170
- GHENT, the van Eycks at, 147, 148  
view in street of, by J. van Eyck, 151  
pictures by van Eyck and van der Meire at, 168
- GHIRLANDAIO, his greatness, 203  
characteristics of his landscapes, 204  
compared with Masaccio, 204  
his treatment of rocks, 206  
as to Flemish influence on, 206  
his works at Berlin, 206; Florence, 205, 206; Lucca, 206; Munich, 206; Rome, 204
- GIORGIONE, his power of generalisation, 69  
his influence on Dürer, 280 *note*  
on the authenticity of pictures attributed to, 331, 335, 336  
influence of literature on, 332  
his birth at Castelfranco, 332  
his drawings, 337  
works of, at Castelfranco, 333; Dresden, 335; Florence, 333; Oxford, 337; Paris, 336; Rome, 337; Venice, 336; Vienna, 334; private collections, 334, 336
- GIOTTO, compared with Duccio, 180  
as to his feeling for landscape, 182-184
- GLASGOW, pictures by Altdorfer, 298  
Palma Vecchio, 339
- GLASS-PAINTING, introduction of, 131  
its effect on landscape-art, 132
- GRAHAM, W., his picture by Fungai, 244
- GREEK ART, landscape in, 93 *et seq.*  
indications of landscape in scene-painting, 94  
its decline, 98
- GREEKS, their feeling for landscape, 8-15, 50
- GREGORY, St., Bishop of Nyssa, on landscape beauty, 28
- GREGORY NAZIANZEN, illuminated MS. of his sermons, 125
- GRIEN: see BALDUNG
- GRÜNEWALD, Mathias, excels in chiaroscuro, 303
- GRÜNEWALD, his works, 303  
as to his indirect influence on Rembrandt, 304, 419
- GOZZOLI, Benozzo, character of his landscapes, 197, 198  
his works at Florence and Pisa, 197
- GUERCINO (Barbieri da Cento), influence of Caravaggio on, 396, 398  
various estimates of, 398  
his landscape drawings, 399  
his works at Bologna, 399; Bridgewater Gallery, 399; Castle Howard, 399; Rome, 399; Vienna, 398
- HAARLEM, pictures by Ouwater, 159; Stuerboudt, 165
- HAGUE, the, pictures at, by Jan Brueghel, 414; Rubens, 431
- HALLAM, H., on Italian poets of sixteenth century, 44, 379
- HAMERTON, P. G., quoted, 19, 152 *note*
- HAMPTON COURT, pictures at, by Holbein (?), 307; Schiavone, 366
- HAUSMANN COLLECTION, drawing by Dürer, 282
- HEBREW view of landscape, 26, 50
- HESIOD, his utilitarian view of nature, 11
- HOLBEIN, Hans, the Elder, influence of van der Weyden on, 305  
works of, 305, 306
- HOLBEIN, Hans, the Younger, human element of his works, 306  
landscape of, 306, 307  
his acquaintance with the works of Mantegna, 308
- HOLSTENIUS, on the Palestrina Nymphæum, 108
- HOMER, his feeling for landscape, 8-11  
colour little noticed by, 10  
illuminated MSS. of, 123
- HOORNBAACH, G., his miniature painting, 141, 142
- HORACE, his feeling for landscape, 21  
*Hortus Deliciarum*, 132
- HUNT, Mrs. Leigh, her bust of Shelley, 190
- IDEAL in art, 80
- ILIAD, illuminated MSS. of, 123
- ILLUMINATION, art of, its influence on landscape-art, 123-144  
its relations to panel-painting, 145, 274
- INDIAN ART, nature of, 88-91
- INNSBRUCK, sketched by Dürer, 282
- IRISH ILLUMINATIONS, 128

- ITALIAN ART, its origin and aim, 154  
 Flemish influence on, 386  
 its influence on later Flemish and German art, 403 *et seq.*, 419 *et seq.*
- ITALY, revival of art in, 178  
 beauty of, revealed by Claude, 436
- JAMESON, Mrs., on Guercino, 398, 399
- JAPANESE ART, landscape in, 92
- JESUITS, their coarseness in art, 380
- JOHN OF BAVARIA, patron of John van Eyck, 147
- JONSON, Ben, his love of nature, 49
- JOSHUA, book of, illuminated MS. of, 124
- JUSTUS OF GHENT, 253
- KALIDASA, his feeling for landscape, 31, 90
- KUGLER, F. T., his description of the mosaic in S. Vitale, 117  
 on the Altdorfer picture at the Nuremberg Brüderhaus, 294, 295 *note*
- KULMBACH, Hans, 286
- LAKES, treatment of, by Perugino, 229-331; by Raphael, 260
- LANDSCAPE, primitive representations of, 7  
 as described by the Greeks, 8-15, 50; by the Hebrews; 26-28, 50; by the Latins, 15-25, 29-50; in early Christian literature, 28, 29, 50; in Eastern poetry, 31-33; by the Troubadours, 33, 34, 51; in Italian literature, 35-45, 51; in English literature, 45, 49, 50 *note*  
 principles of art applied to, 52 *et seq.*
- LANDSCAPE-ART, its scope, 2-5  
 comparatively modern, 6  
 its development independent of literature, 51, 52  
 Dutch school of, 52  
 Romantic school of, 52  
 importance of perspective in, 63; and of generalisation, 69  
 artistic selection in, 81  
 perception of the pathos of nature in, 83  
 Egyptian and Assyrian, 87; Indian, 88; Chinese, 89-92; Japanese, 92; early Greek, 93-99; Roman, 100-112  
 in the mural painting of the Catacombs, 114  
 in early Christian mosaics, 115-122  
 of manuscripts, 123-145  
 effect of diaper painting on, 131  
 early Flemish, 146-177  
 early Italian, 178 *et seq.*; 185  
 Italian, of the sixteenth century, 214-270  
 Leonardo da Vinci on, 215-219  
 German, of fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, 271-308  
 in engravings, 280, 301, 404  
 of the Venetian school, 309-377  
 of the Carracci school, 378  
 of later Flemish and German schools, 423  
 under Rubens, 424-433  
 under Claude and Salvator, 434-439  
 under Turner, 84, 442
- LANFRANCO, Giovanni, his works, 394  
 his appreciation of Salvator Rosa, 437
- LASTMANN, Pieter, his influence on Rembrandt, 304, 418, 420  
 his works at Berlin and Vienna, 418
- LATIN feeling for landscape, 15-25, 50
- LAYARD, Sir Henry, his *St. Jerome* by Savoldo, 357, 358
- LEONARDO DA VINCI: see VINCI
- LEYDEN, picture of L. van Leyden at, 406
- LEYDEN, Lucas van, his hospitality to painters, 404  
 his engravings, 403, 404  
 his works at Antwerp, 405, 406; Berlin, 405; Leyden, 406; Munich, 406; Vienna, 405
- LEYLAND, Mr., his collection of pictures, 212, 240, 305
- LINDSAY, Lord, on the origin of miniature work, 160  
 on Altdorfer's *Battle of Arbela*, 292  
 attributes a picture of van Orley's to Altdorfer, 297  
 on the connexion of Italian and Northern art, 309  
 on van Eyck, 153; Lorenzetti, 189; Schüfelein, 286; Schoreel, 406; L. van Leyden, 404
- LINES, beauty of, consists in combining straightness and curve, 54, 55, 217 *note*  
 opposition of, 58  
 of mountain form, 66
- LIPPI, Filippino, his treatment of rocks, 207  
 his works at Florence, 207, 208; London, 208  
 his portrait in the National Gallery, 190

- LIPPI, Filippo, compared with Masaccio, 195  
 his pictures at Berlin, Florence, and Paris, 195
- LITERATURE, landscape in, 6-58  
 its relations to landscape-art, 51, 52
- LITTA COLLECTION, Milan, 287
- LIVIA, her Villa at Prima Porta, 106-108
- LOCHNER, Stephan, 272
- LOMAZZO, G. P., on Dürer, 286
- LONDON—Apsley House, Correggio, 267 *note*  
 Bridgewater Gallery—Bordone, 362; Carracci, Annibale, 384, 386; Carracci, Ludovico, 381; Domenichino, 388; Guercino, 399; Raphael, 263; Titian, 343, 352  
 British Museum—illuminated MSS., 126, 127, 129, 134, 136, 137, 138, 141, 142; works of Altdorfer, 301, 302; Dürer, 281, 283  
 Buckingham Palace—Rubens, 428; Titian, 340, 352  
 Grosvenor House—Domenichino, 387; van der Weyden, 156  
 National Gallery—Basaiti, 330; Bellini, 317, 319, 320; Beltraffio, 229; de Blea, 174; Botticelli, 212; Caravaggio, 396; Carpaccio, 326; Carracci, Annibale, 384, 385; Casentino, 184; Cima, 329, 340 *note*; Cosimo, 227; Costa (?), 241; Credi, 225; Crivelli, 316; Dossi, 269; Della Francesca, 200; Garofalo, 267; Gheerardt, 170; Lippi, Filippino, 208; Lotto, 360; Mantegna, 315 *note*; Memlinc, 163; Messina, Antonello da, 311; Mostaert, 176; Patenier, 171; Perugino, 232, 233; Pesellino, 196; Pinturicchio, 243, 244; Raphael, 253, 260, 263; Rubens, 429, 431; Schongauer, 274; Schoreel, 407; Signorelli, 236, 237; Titian, 343, 345, 352; van der Weyden, 158 *note*  
 Stafford Gallery—Correggio, 267 *note*
- LONGNIDDRY, picture by Savoldo at, 359
- LORENZETTI, Ambrose, his frescos at Pisa, 125
- LORENZETTI, Pietro, his treatment of rocks, 188; his palm tree, 189
- LORETO, picture at, by Garofalo, 268
- LOTTO, Lorenzo, his works at Alzano, 360; Asolo, 360; Bergamo, 360; National Gallery, 360; Paris, 359; Venice, 360; Vienna, 360
- LOUVAIN, works of Stuerboudt at, 165, 166
- LÜBECK, alleged pictures of Altdorfer at, 297, 301 *note*; and van Orley, 403
- LUCAN, illuminated MS. of, 130
- LUCCA, works at, of Aspertini, 241; Fra Bartolommeo, 247; Ghirlandaio, 206
- LUCERNE, from a drawing of Holbein's, 306, 307
- LUCRETIVUS, his appreciation of landscape beauty, 15-17, 335
- LUDIUS, Pliny's account of, 105  
 his paintings at Livia's Villa, 106-108
- LUINI, Bernardino, compared with Leonardo, 227, 228  
 his works at Milan, 228
- LYVERSBERG PASSION, Master of, pictures attributed to, 272, 273
- MABUSE, Jan van, 403  
*Machinisti*, the, 394
- MADRID, works at, of Patenier, 172; Raphael, 260, 263; Titian, 356
- MAESEYCK, birthplace of the van Eycks, 147
- MAESTRICHT, art school at, 147
- MALCOLM COLLECTION, sketch by Dürer, 282
- "MANNERISTS," the, 379
- MANTEGNA, Andrea, his minute literalism, 69  
 peculiarities of his landscapes, 312-314  
 his treatment of rocks, 314  
 his influence on Bellini, 317  
 his works at Florence, 313; Mantua, 312; Padua, 312; Paris, 313, 314; Venice, 312
- MANTEGNA, Francesco, picture by, in the National Gallery, 315 *note*
- MANTUA, fresco of Mantegna at, 312  
 on the picture painted for, by Bellini, 319 *note*
- MANUEL, Nicholas, 290
- MANUSCRIPT ART, landscape in, 122-145  
 panel-painting an extension of, 145, 274
- MANZA, Titian's villa at, 346

- MASACCIO** (Tommaso Guidi), his feeling for nature, 51, 154  
 portraits of, 190  
 unity of his conception, 191  
 reality of his landscape, 191, 194  
 his treatment of mountains, 193, 194  
 excellence of his architecture, 194  
 testimony of da Vinci to, 194 *note*  
 mystery as to his death, 195  
 his works at Florence, 191, 194; Rome, 193
- MASOLINO**, alleged master of Masaccio, 195
- MATHIAS**, Emperor of Germany, patron of van Valkenburg, 417
- MATSYS**, Quentin, his relations with Patenier, 173  
 his works at Antwerp, Brussels, and Frankfort, 173
- MAZZOLINO**, Ludovico, 268
- MEDICI**, Lorenzo di, his appreciation of nature, 41, 47
- MEIRE**, G. van der, his advance in landscape-art, 168  
 his works at Antwerp and Ghent, 168
- MELDOLA**, villa of Albani at, 391
- MELEM**, Hans van, 419
- MELISENDA**, wife of Fulke of Jerusalem, her psalter, 127
- MEMLINC**, Hans, stories of, 159  
 question as to place of death, 159  
 his miniature work, 159  
 his treatment of rocks, 159; and of mountains, 161  
 his excellence in landscape, 161, 163  
 pictures of Stuerboudt attributed to, 163-165  
 teaches Antonello oil-painting, 311  
 his shrine, 313  
 his works at Bruges, 161, 164; Dresden, 165; Florence, 163; Frankfort, 163; London, 163; Munich, 160; Paris, 163; Rome, 163; Turin, 160; Venice, 159
- MESSINA**, Antonello da, introduces oil-painting at Venice, 311, 318  
 his works, 311
- MESSKIRCH**, painting of Bartel Beham at, 289
- MEUSE**, valley of the, 147
- MEYER**, Dr. Julius, his article on Altdorfer, 295 *note*, 298  
 on the alleged pictures of Altdorfer at Lübeck, Nuremberg, Ratisbon, and Siena, 296, 297, 301 *note*, 403 *note*
- MICHAEL ANGELO**: see BUONAROTTI
- MICHELLE DE FRANCE**, wife of Philip of Burgundy, patroness of the van Eycks, 147
- MILAN**—Ambrosian Library, 123; 359 *note*  
 Brera—Albani, 389; Basaiti, 330; Bassano, 364; Bordone, 362; Bril, 411; Conegliano, 328; Costa, 241; Crivelli, 317; Dosso Dossi, 269; Francia, 237, 238, 239; Luini, 228; Raphael, 257; Savoldo, 358; Titian, 69, 348  
 Litta Collection, 287  
 S. Maria delle Grazie, Leonardo's *Last Supper* at, 224  
 S. Maurizio, works at, of Luini, 228
- MILTON**, his feeling for landscape beauty, 49  
 his use of "rural," 49
- MINIATURE** work in MSS., 123-143  
 practised by van Eyck, 153, 160  
 origin of, 159, 160
- MINNESINGERS**, their feeling for nature, 34, 51
- MOMPER**, J., 415
- MONASTERIES**, positions of, favour a study of nature, 30
- MONTE OLIVETO**, Bazzi's frescos at, 245
- MORELLI**, on Filippino Lippi's landscapes, 208 *note*  
 ascribes a fresco of Perugino to Pinturicchio, 234 *note*, 242 *note*  
 attributes Ferrucci's portrait to Piero di Cosimo, 241 *note*  
 on Raphael's *Knight's Vision*, 253  
 on Titian's portrait of Charles V., 427
- MOSAICS**, landscape-art in, 112, 115-122  
 signs of revival of art in, 179
- MOSS**, treatment of, by Altdorfer, 296, 301; Elsheimer, 422; Ostendorfer, 296 *note*
- MOSTAERT**, Frank, 176
- MOSTAERT**, Jan, his works, 176  
 picture by, attributed to Altdorfer, 297
- MOTHER-OF-PEARL**, prevailing colour of Venice, 315
- MOUNTAINS**, in Homer's landscapes, 9  
 how regarded by the Greeks, 13; by the Hebrews, 27  
 Dante's enjoyment of, 36; in Japanese art, 92

- in the Byzantine manuscripts, 125  
 treatment of, by Bellini, 65, 66; Dürer, 277, 278, 283; van Eyck, 150; Masaccio, 193; van der Meire, 168; Memlinc, 161; Titian, 353, 355; da Vinci, 42, 217
- MOUNTAIN OUTLINES, beauty of, 58, 65, 66  
 opposition of lines in, 58
- MUNICIPAL LIFE IN ITALY, effect of, on art, 178, 180
- MUNICH, works at, by Altdorfer, 292, 295; Angelico da Fiesole, 186; Bassano, 365; de Bles, 174; Bruyn, 419; Elsheimer, 421; Feselen, 304; Gheerardt (?), 170; Ghirlandaio, 206; Grünewald, 303; Holbein, the Elder, 305; van Leyden, 406; Master of the Lyversberg Passion, 272, 273; van Melem, 419; Memlinc, 160; Raphael, 260; Rubens, 430, 433; Schedone, 395; Schongauer, 274; Stuerboudt, 163-165; Titian, 356, 427 *note*; van der Weyden, 155, 157; Wohlgemuth, 276
- MUNTZ, on Raphael's effect of light, 263 *note*
- MURAL-PAINTING, Greek, 99; Roman, 110  
 in the Catacombs, 114
- MURANO, works at, by Bellini, 321; Basaiti, 331
- MURILLO, influence of Caravaggio on, 397
- NAPLES, Bay of, a difficult subject for art, 71
- NAPLES MUSEUM, examples of Pompeian landscape-art at, 100-104  
 pictures at, by Albani, 390; Bellini, 318; Domenichino, 387; Elsheimer, 423; Garofalo, 268; Lanfranco, 394; Palma Vecchio, 338; Schedone, 395
- NAPOLEON, carries off Altdorfer's *Battle of Arbela*, 292
- Naturalisti*, school of, 392, 395, 439
- NATURE as described by the Greeks, 8-15, 50; Hebrews, 26-28, 50; Latins, 15-25, 29, 50; in early Christian literature, 28, 29, 50; by the Troubadours, 33, 34, 51; in Italian literature 35-45; in English literature, 44-49, 50 *note*  
 her pathos, gradual apprehension of, 82-84  
 no outline in, 54  
 curvature of line in, 55
- NATURE-MYTHS show a feeling for landscape, 8  
 in Vedic poetry, 31
- NETHERLANDS: see FLEMISH ART
- NICÆA, second Council of, its canons fatal to art, 121
- NORDLINGEN, works of Schänfelein at, 286
- NUREMBERG, early landscape art of, 274  
 depicted by Dürer, 280 *note*, 281  
 German Museum—Altdorfer (?), 294  
 Landauer Brüderhaus Collection—Altdorfer, 294, 295 *note*  
 St. Lawrence—Wohlgemuth, 275  
 Moritz Capella—Altdorfer, 293, 294, 296, 301 *note*; Burgkmair, 288; Cranach, 304; Dürer, 277; Feselen, 304; Schänfelein, 287; Wohlgemuth, 275
- Odyssey* a favourite subject for ancient art, 99, 104, 110
- OIL-PAINTING brought to perfection by the Van Eycks, 148, 154  
 introduced into Italy, 196, 253, 313, 318
- ORLEY, Bernhard van, picture by, attributed to Altdorfer, 297, 403 *note*
- OSTENDORFER, Michael, picture by, attributed to Altdorfer, 296 and *note*  
 moss introduced by, 296 *note*
- OTRANTO, mosaics of, 179
- OUTLINE, does not exist in nature, 54
- OUWATER, A. van, 158
- OWL, introduced into all de Bles' pictures, 174
- OXFORD—Bodleian Library, MSS. at, 137, 138  
 Christchurch, drawing by Giorgione, 337  
 Taylor Gallery, sketches by Raphael, 257
- PACCHIAROTTI, 244
- PADUA, pictures at, by Basaiti, 330; Giotto, 183; Mantegna, 312; Titian, 343, 344, 348, 350
- PALESTRINA NYMPHÆUM, the, 108  
 its theatrical character, 110
- PALMA VECCHIO, 337-339  
 his works at Dresden, 338; Glasgow, 339; Naples, 338; Vienna, 338
- PAMPHILOS, 97

- PANEL-PAINTING**, introduction of, 145  
an extension of manuscript-art, 145, 274
- PANSHANGER**, works at, by Fra Bartolomeo, 248; Del Sarto, 249; Guercino, 399
- PAOLO**, Giovanni di, his pictures at Siena, 181, 182
- PARIS**—Louvre, pictures at, by Beltraffio, 229; Bril, 410; Carracci, Annibale, 383; Cima, 328; Cosimo, 227; Costa, 240; Credi, 225; Del Sarto, 250; Domenichino, 387; Dürer, 281, 282; van Eyck, 151; Feti, 397; Garofalo, 267; Giorgione, 336; Lippi, Filippo, 195; Lotto, 359; Mantegna, 313, 314; Memlinc, 163; Raphael, 254, 257, 260, 262; Rubens, 433; Titian, 348 *note*, 349; da Vinci, 221, 222
- PARMA**, works at, of Badalocchio, 395; Carracci, L., 382; Conegliano, 328, 329; Correggio, 265, 266, 267; Francia, 238; Garofalo, 267; Tintoretto, 373; Titian (?), 348
- PARRHASIUS**, 97, 98
- PATENIER**, J. de, lacks sense of fitness, 66  
his relations with Dürer and Matsys, 173  
his works at Antwerp, 172; Berlin, 171; London, 171; Madrid, 172; Vienna, 171
- PAUSIAS**, 97, 98
- PENCZ**, George, 289
- PENRHYN**, Lord, his *Holy Family* by Garofalo, 268
- PERIAKOS**, 98
- PERSIAN POETRY**, 33
- PERSPECTIVE**, unknown to Egyptian art, 87  
in Chinese art, 90
- PERSPECTIVE** of disappearance, Leonardo da Vinci on, 215, 216
- PERSPECTIVE**, aërial, importance of, 75  
reduced to a science by Francesca, 199  
Leonardo da Vinci on, 215  
treatment of, by van Leyden, 405
- PERSPECTIVE**, linear, beauty of, 61  
its importance in landscape-art, 63, 70  
principles of, demonstrated by Francesca, 199  
Leonardo da Vinci on, 215
- PERUGINO** (Pietro Vannucci), a pupil of Francesca, 201  
his lake scenery, 229; distances, 230, 231; trees, 230  
Roman ruins introduced by, 235  
his works at Florence, 231, 232, 234; London, Rome, and Siena, 232, 234  
his frescos in the Sistine chapel, 234  
his relations with Schongauer, 274
- PESARO**, as depicted by Savoldo, 357, 358  
picture at, by Bellini, 318
- PESELLINO**, compared with Masaccio, 196  
his works at Florence and London, 196  
a pioneer of oil-painting in Italy, 196
- PESTH**, Raphael's *Madonna* at, 262
- PETRARCH**, his feelings with regard to nature, 39, 40
- PETWORTH**, pictures at, by Bril, 411; by Elsheimer, 422
- PHILIP OF BURGUNDY**, patron of John van Eyck, 148
- PIETRO**, Sano di, 182
- PILES**, Roger de, on Guercino, 398
- PINTURICCHIO**, Bernardino, two frescos of Perugino ascribed to by Morelli, 234 *note*, 242 *note*  
his landscape, 242-244  
his works at London, 243, 244; Rome, 242, 244; Siena and Spello, 243
- PISA**, frescos at, of Gozzoli, 197; of Lorenzetti, 125
- PLATO**, his perception of landscape beauty, 12
- PLINY**, his mention of Ludius, 105
- PLINY**, the younger, his feeling for landscape, 23
- PLUTARCH**, his notices of Agatharchos, 94, 95
- POLLAIUOLO**, Piero, characteristics of his landscapes, 201, 202  
his works at Berlin, 202; Florence, 201; London, 202; Turin, 201
- POLYGNOTUS**, absence of landscape in his painting, 93  
imitates transparency, 94
- POMPEII**, example of landscape-art from, 100-104
- PONTE**, Francesco da, 363
- PONTE**, Jacopo da: see **BASSANO**
- PORDENONE**, his works at Colalto, 339; at Pordenone, 339  
panels wrongly attributed to, 340

- POSONYI - HALLOT COLLECTION, Dürer, 281  
 POUSSIN, Gaspar, 394, 440  
 PRAGUE, picture at, by Baldung, 290  
 PRIMA PORTA, Livia's villa at, 106  
 PROPORTION of parts, 59-61, 66  
 PROTOGENES, his realism in art, 89  
 PSALTERS, illuminated, 125, 126, 127, 130, 134  
  
 QUIRINUS, St., on the martyrdom of, as depicted by Altdorfer, 293, 299-301; probably a confusion with St. Florian, 301 and *note*  
  
 RADIATION, unity of, 64, 65  
 RALEIGH, Sir Walter, his love of nature, 47  
 RAPHAEL, Apollo and Diana survive in his *Crucifixion*, 127 *note*  
     his pre-eminence in art, 252  
     chronology of his landscapes, 252 *et seq.*  
     influence of Justus of Ghent and Timoteo Viti on, 253  
     some of his landscapes treeless, 255  
     topography of his landscapes, 256, 257  
     influence of Leonardo on, 258-261  
     his Roman period, 261  
     introduces Roman ruins into his pictures, 262  
     development of landscape power, 262-264  
     compared with Dürer, 279  
     his *Miraculous Draught of Fishes* imitated in Titian's picture at Serravalle, 345  
     works of art at Berlin, 255, 258; Dudley House, 254, 255; Florence, 259, 260, 263; London, 253, 260, 268; Madrid, 260, 263; Milan, 257; Munich, 260; Oxford, 257; Paris, 254, 257, 260, 262; Pesth, 262; Rome, 255, 261, 262, 263; St. Petersburg, 255; Siena, 263; Vienna, 260  
 RATISBON, Altdorfer's home at, 291  
     as to his works at, 295  
 RAVENNA, mosaics at S. Apollinare in Classe, 118, 120  
     S. Apollinare Nuovo, 117, 118  
 RAVENNA, S. Maria in Cosmedin, 118, 119  
     Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, 115  
     S. Vitale, 116, 120  
  
 REAL, the, in art, 80  
 REFLECTION, its effect on colour, 77  
 REMBRANDT, his use of shadow, 72, 440  
     whether indirectly influenced by Grünewald, 304  
     influence of Lastmann on, 418, 420  
     his poetic feeling, 441  
 RENI, Guido, his relations with Albani, 391  
     influence of Caravaggio on, 396  
     his works at Bologna, 391; Rome, 391  
 REYNOLDS, Sir J., his estimate of "Peasant" Brueghel, 412  
     on Rubens, 426  
 RIBERA, Giuseppe (Spagnoletto), influence of Caravaggio on, 396  
 RICHTER, Dr., suggests that Francesca was the pupil of Uccello, 200 *note*  
     on Leonardo da Vinci's Monte "Monboso," 219 *note*  
 ROBINSON, Mr., on the topography of Raphael, 257  
 ROCKS, treatment of, in Pompeian art, 101; in early Christian mosaics, 119; in Byzantine manuscripts, 125; in Flemish MSS., 137, 139; in the Bedford Missal, 140; in the *Thesaurus Historiarum*, 143; in mediæval art, 188; by Angelico da Fiesole, 187-189; Basaiti, 330; de Bles, 175; Carpaccio, 326; Duccio, 187-189; Dürer, 283; Ghirlandaio, 206; Giotto, 183; Lorenzetti, 188; Mantegna, 314; Matsys, 407; van der Meire, 168; Memlinc, 161; Paolo, Giovanni di, 182, 187, 189; Patenier, 172; Schoreel, 407; Titian, 351  
 ROLLIN, Chancellor, represented in a picture of van Eyck, 151  
     picture by van der Weyden painted for, 156  
*Roman de la Rose*, 142  
 ROMANO, Giulio, 425  
 ROMANS, their appreciation of nature keener than the Greek, 22, 24  
 ROME, remains of early landscape painting at, 107, 108  
     Capitol—Giorgione, 337; Schiavone, 367; Tintoret, 373  
     Cemetery of Domitilla, 114



- Churches—mosaics and frescos in S. Agnese, 121; S. Clemente, 179, 193; SS. Cosmo e Damiano, 116, 119; S. Gregorio Magno, 391, 395; S. Maria Maggiore, 115, 116, 179; S. Maria in Trastevere, 179; S. Prase, 120, 121
- Palaces—*Borghese*—Bassano, 364, 365; Bril, 411; Correggio, 265, 269; Domenichino, 387; Dosso Dossi, 269; Francia, 238; Garofalo, 268; Giambattista, 269; Pinturricchio, 244; Raphael, 261; Scarsellino, 394; Titian, 343; Veronese, 368. *Colonna*—Albani, 390; Brueghel, Jan, 414; Guercino, 399; Tintoretto, 373, 374. *Corsini*—Bonifazio, 361; Carracci, L., 382; Guercino, 399. *Doria*—Carracci, Annibale, 384; Memlinc, 163. *Farnesina*—fresco of Bazzi's, 246. *Rospigliosi*—Guido Reni, 391
- Sistine Chapel—frescos of Botticelli, 209, 210, 212, 213; Ghirlandaio, 204; Perugino, 234; Pinturicchio, 242; Roselli, 208; Signorelli, 234, 235
- Vatican—Esquiline landscapes in, 110; illuminated MSS., 124; pictures of Domenichino, 387; Guercino, 398; Perugino, 232; Raphael, 255, 261, 262, 263
- ROSA, Salvator, his use of shadows, 72  
his idealism of nature, 81, 83  
restlessness of his genius, 437  
his wanderings, 437, 438  
characteristics of his landscapes, 439
- ROSELLI, Cosimo, his frescos in the Sistine Chapel, 208  
as to his painting the *Sermon on the Mount*, 209
- ROSENBERG, Dr. Adolf, on the alleged pictures of Altdorfer at Ratisbon, 296  
on Altdorfer's *Nativity*, 297
- ROTTERDAM, pictures at, by Bloemart, 408; Brueghel (Pieter), 413; Pencz, 289
- RUBENS, influence of Caravaggio on, 397  
his travels in Italy, 424, 425; in Spain, 427 *note*, 431  
character of his landscapes, 426 *et seq.*  
his home scenery, 427  
his introduction of Roman ruins, 430  
his storm effects, 431  
his works at Castle Howard, 430; Dresden, 430, 431; Florence, 431; the Hague, 431; London, 428, 429, 431; Munich, 430, 433; Paris, 433; St. Petersburg, 429; Vienna, 431; Wallace Collection, 428; Windsor, 428
- RUDOLF II., Emperor, patron of Savery, 415
- RUINS, Roman, introduced into scenery by Botticelli, 213; Perugino, 235; Raphael, 261; Rubens, 430
- RURAL, use of the word by Milton, 49
- RUSKIN, John, on Homeric landscape, 10  
on the appreciation by Aristophanes of landscape beauty, 13  
on the "Law of Radiation," 63  
on the curvature of mountain debris, 66  
on laws of composition, 70  
on mediæval treatment of rocks, 188  
on the landscape of the Carracci school, 378  
his divisions of Italian landscape-art, 214  
on Bellini, 322, 324; Bonifazio, 362; Dante, 37, 39; Domenichino, 386; Dürer, 284 *note*, 285; Francia, 239; Ghirlandaio, 205, 206; Giotto, 184; Mantegna, 312; Masaccio, 191; Perugino, 229; Tintoretto, 369, 370 *et seq.*; Titian, 341, 347, 348; Veronese, 369
- ST. ETHELWOLD MS., clouds in, 140 and *note*
- ST. GALL, Irish illumination practised at, 128
- ST. PETERSBURG, works at, of Raphael, 255; Rubens, 429
- SANDRART, Joach. de, on Grünewald, 303
- SANTI, Giovanni, father of Raphael, 253
- SAVERY, Roelandt, under the patronage of the Emperor Rudolf, 415  
his merits and defects, 416  
his pictures at Dresden and Vienna, 416
- SAVOLDO, Gian. Girolamo, his love of twilight, 356  
his works at Berlin, 359; Florence, 358, 359 *note*; Milan, 358; National Gallery, 356; Turin, 358; Vienna, 359; private collections, 357, 358, 359
- SCARSELLINO (Ippolito Scarsella), 394



- SCENE-PAINTING, Greek, use of landscape in, by Sophocles, 12, 51, 94
- SCHÄUFELEIN, Hans L., Lord Lindsay's praise of, 286  
his works, 287
- SCHEDONE, Bartolommeo, influence of the *Naturalisti* on, 395, 396
- SCHIAVONE, Andrea, picture of, attributed to Titian (?), 340 *note*  
story of his life, 366  
Tintoretto's opinion of, 366  
his works at Berlin, 367; Florence, 367; Hampton Court, 366; Rome, 367; Turin, 367; Vienna, 366
- SCHONGAUER, Martin, his works, 274  
his relations with Perugino, 274  
his influence on South German art, 274
- SCHOREEL, Jan, Canon of Utrecht, travels in Palestine, 406  
his works at Amsterdam, Antwerp, and London, 407; at Utrecht and Warmerhuizen, 407 *note*
- SCHWABACH, altar-piece of Wohlgemuth at, 276
- SEA in Homer's landscapes, 9  
dear to Catullus, 17; to Dante, 37  
treatment of, in Pompeian art, 103  
in the poems of Christina of Pisa, 139  
Leonardo da Vinci on, 218  
treatment of, by Dürer, 279; by Titian, 343
- SEBENICO, birthplace of Schiavone, 366
- SERRAVALLE, picture of Titian at, 343, 346  
scenery of, 351
- SHADOWS, uses of, 71-74  
lack of, in early Italian art, 185  
their effect on colour, 76
- SHAKESPEARE, his appreciation of nature, 48
- SHELLEY, his likeness to the portrait of Masaccio, 190
- SIDNEY, Sir Philip, his love of nature, 47
- SIENA, school of painting at—  
Academy—Altdorfer, 299, 301 *note*; Bordone, 363; Duccio, 127, 180, 182; Fungai, 244; Paolo, Giovanni di, 181, 182; Pinturicchio, 243; Signorelli, 236; copy of Raphael's *Perla*, 263  
Duomo library—frescos of Pinturicchio at, 243
- S. Agostino—Perugino's *Crucifixion* at, 232
- S. Domenico—Bazzi, 245; Signorelli, 236
- SIGNORELLI, Luca, pupil of Francesca, 201  
his frescos in the Sistine Chapel, 234, 235  
his works at Florence, London, and Siena, 236, 237  
his character, 237
- SIRMIO, described by Catullus, 17
- SKY in a Vulgate, 129; Francia's, 239
- SMOKE, Leonardo da Vinci on, 218
- SOCRATES has little feeling for landscape beauty, 12
- SODOMA, Il: see BAZZI
- SOPHOCLES uses landscape in his scene-painting, 12, 51, 94
- SPADA, Lionello, influence of Caravaggio on, 396
- SPAGNOLETTO (Ribera), influence of Caravaggio on, 316
- SPELLO, *Annunciation* of Pinturicchio at, 243
- SPENSER, his love of nature, 48
- STEIN, chateau of, home of Rubens, 427  
represented by him, 428
- STUERBOUDT (Dierick Bouts), landscape of, copied by the Master of the Lyversberg Passion, 273  
works of, attributed to Memlinc, 163-165; at Antwerp, 166; Brussels, 166; Berlin, 167; Haarlem, 165; Louvain, 165, 166; Munich, 163-165
- SUN and Moon eclipse, how represented in early *Crucifixions*, 127  
survivals of, 127 *note*
- SYMONDS, J. A., on Gentile da Fabriano's *Adoration of the Kings*, 310  
on the prevailing colours of Florence and Venice, 315
- TASSI, Agostino, teacher of Claude, 434
- TASSO, his feeling for nature artificial, 44  
his influence on Bolognese art, 379
- Tenebrosi*, the, 396
- THAUSING, Dr., on Giorgione's influence on Dürer, 280 *note*  
on Dürer's *Weiherhaus*, 281  
his Tyrolean sketches, 283
- THEOCRITUS, his appreciation of landscape beauty, 13

- Thesaurus Historiarum*, illuminated MS. of, 143
- TIBULLUS, as to his feeling for landscape beauty, 22
- TIMANTHES, 97
- TINTORETTO (Jacopo Robusti), his power of generalisation, 69  
 difference between him and Titian, 370, 375  
 Ruskin's estimate and descriptions of, 369, 370 *et seq.*  
 his treatment of trees, 373  
 his works at Brussels, 373; Castle Howard, 373; Florence, 374; Parma, 373; Rome, 373, 374; Venice, 370-372, 373
- TISIO, Benvenuto: see GAROFALO
- TITIAN, his power of generalisation, 69  
 his use of shadows, 72  
 whether he helped Dossi at Ferrara, 269  
 his relations with German landscape painters, 309  
 his work at the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, 381  
 lost works of, 340 and *note*  
 the founder of landscape-art, 341  
 born at Cadore, 342  
 his treatment of the sea, 343; of the plain, 345; of forest scenery, 347, 349; of clouds and mountains, 353, 355  
 his foregrounds, 351  
 topography of his scenery, 352-355  
 differences between him and Tintoretto, 370, 375  
 his works at Alnwick, 324, 353, 354; Bridgewater Gallery, 343, 352; Buckingham Palace, 340, 352; Chatsworth (?), 340 *note*; Florence, 346, 347; Madrid, 356; Milan, 69, 348; Munich, 356, 427 *note*; National Gallery, 343, 345, 352; Padua, 343, 344, 348, 350; Paris, 348 *note*, 349; Parma (?), 348; Rome, 343; Serravalle, 343, 346; Venice, 348, 351
- TOURNAI wood-carving, its influence on miniature work, 160
- TRANSPARENCY, its effect on colour, 77  
 imitated by Polygnotus, 94
- TREES in ancient art, 88, 89, 101, 107  
 in the Ravenna mosaics, 117, 118  
 in Byzantine MSS., 124-126, 127  
 in a ninth-century Vulgate, 129  
 in Flemish MSS., 137, 139  
 Leonardo da Vinci on, 216, 217  
 treatment of, by Angelico, 189; Botticelli, 210; Dürer, 281, 282, 283; Giotto, 184; Perugino, 230; Raphael, 255; Tintoretto, 373; Titian, 347-349
- TROUBADOURS, their feeling for nature, 33, 51
- TURIN, works at, of Albani, 390; Bassano, 365; Botticelli, 212; Bril, 411; Carracci, Agostino, 382; Memlinc, 160; Pollaiuolo, 201; Savoldo, 358; Schiavone, 367
- TURNER, his refinements of composition, 71  
 his atmospheric effects, 76, 441  
 his idealism in landscape, 81, 441; brings out the pathos in nature, 84, 441
- TWILIGHT, treatment of, by Bassano, 363; Burgkmair, 288; Savoldo, 357
- TYROL, the, depicted by Savery, 416
- UCCELLO, Paolo, 196
- UFFENBACH, his connexion with Grünewald and Elsheimer, 303, 419, 420
- UNITY, organic, value and beauty of, 63 *et seq.*
- URBAN VIII., Pope, a patron of Claude's, 435
- UTRECHT, pictures of Schoreel, 407 *note*
- VALKENBURG, Lucas van, his works at Vienna, 417
- VAUCLUSE, 39
- VEDAS, nature-myths in, 81
- VELASQUEZ, influence of Caravaggio on, 396
- VELDECK, H. von, his illuminated *Æneid*, 133
- VENETIAN SCHOOL, landscape of, 309-377  
 its connexion with the northern schools of art, 309, 377  
 its sense of colour, 309, 310
- VENICE, its relations with Augsburg, 287  
 depicted by Burgkmair, 288  
 Academy—Basaiti, 330, 331; Bellini, Gentile, 317; Bellini, Giovanni, 320, 324; Bonifazio, 361, 362; Carpaccio, 325, 327; Conegliano, 327; Giorgione, 336; Mantegna, 312; Tintoretto, 372; Titian, 348; Veronese, 369

- Churches—*S. Alvisé*—Carpaccio, 326.  
*S. Crisostomo*—Bellini, 322, 323. *S. Francesco della Vigna*—Bellini, 322.  
*S. Giorgio dei Schiavoni*—Carpaccio, 325. *S. Giovanni in Bragora*—Conegliano, 328. *S. Maria del Carmine*—Conegliano, 327. *S. Maria dell' Orto*—Conegliano, 327; Lotto, 360; Tintoretto, 372. *Madonna della Salute*—Basaiti, 331. *S. Marco*—works of Bonifazio, 362; Memlinc, 159. *S. Zaccaria*—Bellini, 321  
 Fondaco dei Tedeschi, 280 *note*, 288, 331  
 Grimani collection, works of "Alberto d' Olanda" at, 159  
 Manfrini Palace—Giorgione, 336  
 Sala del Maggior Consiglio—Bassano's frescos in, 365  
 Scuola di San Rocco, works of Tintoretto, 370-372  
 VERHAEGHT, teacher of Rubens, 427  
 VERMEYEN, Jan Cornelis, 408  
 VERONESE, Paolo, 367-369  
   his works at Dresden, 368; Florence, 368, 369; Rome, 368; Venice, 369; Ruskin on, 369  
 VERROCCHIO, A. del, his *Baptism of Christ*, 201, 203  
 VESUVIUS, why not portrayed in Pompeian art, 105 *note*  
 VIENNA—Belvedere, an Altdorfer originally at, 297; pictures at, by Basaiti, 331; de Bles, 174; Brueghel (Pieter), 412; Brueghel, Jan, 413; Cranach, 304; Dürer, 279; Gassel, 407; Giorgione, 334; Grünewald, 303; Lotto, 360; Momper, 415; Mostaert, 176; Palma Vecchio, 338; Patenier, 171; Pencz, 289; Raphael, 260; Rubens, 431; Savery, 416; Schiavone, 366; van Valkenburg, 417; Vinckebooms, 417  
 Liechtenstein Collection—Bassano, 365; Bloemart, 408; Elsheimer, 422; Guercino, 398; Lastmann, 418; van Leyden, 405; Savoldo, 359; van Valkenburg, 417  
 Lippmann Collection—Kulmbach, 286  
 VINCI, Leonardo da, on Masaccio, 194 *note* on Botticelli, 212  
   why chosen to give his name to a period, 214  
   his *Treatise on Painting*, 214-219  
   on perspective and colour, 215  
   on trees, 216, 217  
   on clouds, 218  
   on mountain outlines, 42, 217  
   on transitory effects in nature, 42, 218  
   what mountain is meant by "Monboso," 219 *note*  
   strangeness of his landscapes, 221  
   topography of his mountains, 222 *note*  
   his cave scenery, 223  
   his influence on Raphael, 258 *et seq.*  
   his works at Florence, 223; Milan, 224; Paris, 221, 222; Windsor, 219, 220  
 VINCKEBOOMS, David, 417  
 VIRGIL, his feeling for landscape, 18-21  
   his perception of colour, 19  
   illuminated MSS. of, 123  
 VITI, Timoteo, his influence on Raphael, 253  
 VITRUVIUS, describes Greek mural art, 99  
 VIVARINI, the, pupils of Gentile, 311  
   their sense of colour, 315  
 Vos, Martin de, his relations with Tintoretto, 408  
 VULGATE, illuminated, 129, 130  
 WAAGEN, Dr., quoted, 125, 126 *note*, 127  
   on van Leyden's earliest painting, 406 *note*  
   on Rubens, 426  
 WALLACE, Sir Richard, his *Spring* by Rubens, 428  
 WALS, Gottfried, 434  
 WARDOUR CASTLE, picture of Caravaggio at, 396  
 WARMENHUIZEN, pictures of Schoreel at, 407 *note*  
 WEMYSS, Earl of, picture of Savoldo in his collection, 359  
 WESTMINSTER, Duke of, his triptych by van der Weyden, 156  
   a picture by Domenichino in his collection, 387  
 WEYDEN, van der, his style compared with the van Eycks', 155  
   his lack of generalisation, 157  
   no pathos in his landscapes, 157  
   his influence on Italian art, 158  
   his works at Berlin, 156; Brussels, 158 *note*; Frankfort, 156; London, 156, 158 *note*, 387; Munich, 155, 157

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>WINDSOR PALACE, Leonardo da Vinci,<br/>219, 220 ; Rubens, 428</p> <p>WOERMANN, Dr., his <i>Die Landschaft in der<br/>Kunst der Alten Völker</i>, 86 note, 88</p> <p>on landscape in Greek scene-painting, 94</p> <p>on the fruit-painting in Livia's villa,<br/>106 note</p> <p>on the Palestrina Nymphæum, 108</p> <p>WOHLGEMUTH, Michael, Flemish influence<br/>on, 275</p> | <p>his works, 275, 276</p> <p>master of Albert Dürer, 276</p> <p>WOLTMANN, Dr., on Bartel Beham, 289</p> <p>on Grünewald, 303</p> <p>on the Alps of the elder Holbein, 305</p> <p>WOLTMANN and WOERMANN on miniature<br/>art, 123-125</p><br><p>ZAMPIERI, Domenico : see DOMENICHINO</p> <p>ZEUXIS, 97</p> |
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*LIST OF MAPS.*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. GEOGRAPHICAL SYSTEMS OF THE ANCIENTS.                                     | 21. GREECE AT THE TIME OF THE PERSIAN WARS.                      |
| 2. THE WORLD AS KNOWN TO THE ANCIENTS.                                       | 22. GREECE AT THE TIME OF THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR.                 |
| 3. EMPIRES OF THE BABYLONIANS, LYDIANS, MEDES, AND PERSIANS.                 | 23. GREECE AT THE TIME OF THE ACHÆAN LEAGUE.                     |
| 4. EMPIRE OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT.  | 24. NORTHERN GREECE.   |
| 5. KINGDOMS OF THE SUCCESSORS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT. (FIRST PART.)          | 25. CENTRAL GREECE—ATHENS.                                       |
| 6. KINGDOMS OF THE SUCCESSORS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT. (SECOND PART.)         | 26. PELOPONNESUS.—WITH PLAN OF SPARTA.                           |
| 7. THE ROMAN EMPIRE IN ITS GREATEST EXTENT.                                  | 27. SHORES AND ISLANDS OF THE ÆGEAN SEA.                         |
| 8. THE ROMAN EMPIRE AFTER ITS DIVISION INTO THE EASTERN AND WESTERN EMPIRES. | 28. HISTORICAL MAPS OF ASIA MINOR.                               |
| 9. GREEK AND PHœNICIAN COLONIES.   | 29. ASIA MINOR.  |
| 10. BRITANNIA.   | 30. ARABIA.  |
| 11. HISPANIA.  | 31. INDIA.   |
| 12. GALLIA.  | 32. NORTHERN PART OF AFRICA.                                     |
| 13. GERMANIA, RHÆTIA, NORICUM.   | 33. ÆGYPT AND ÆTHIOPIA.  |
| 14. PÆONIA, THRACIA, MÆSIA, ILLYRIA, DACIA, PANNONIA.                        | 34. HISTORICAL MAPS OF THE HOLY LAND.                            |
| 15. HISTORICAL MAPS OF ITALY, SARDINIA, AND CORSICA.                         | 35. THE HOLY LAND. (NORTHERN DIVISION.)                          |
| 16. ITALIA SUPERIOR.   | 36. THE HOLY LAND. (SOUTHERN DIVISION.)                          |
| 17. ITALIA INFERIOR.   | 37. JERUSALEM, ANCIENT AND MODERN.                               |
| 18. PLAN OF ROME.  | 38. ENVIRONS OF JERUSALEM.                                       |
| 19. ENVIRONS OF ROME.  | 39. SINAI.   |
| 20. GREECE AFTER THE DORIC MIGRATION.  | 40. ASIA, TO ILLUSTRATE THE OLD TESTAMENT AND CLASSICAL AUTHORS. |
|  | 41. MAP, TO ILLUSTRATE THE NEW TESTAMENT.                        |
|  | 42. PLAN OF BABYLON.   |
|  | 43. PLANS OF NINEVEH, TROY, ALEXANDRIA, AND BYZANTIUM.           |

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